

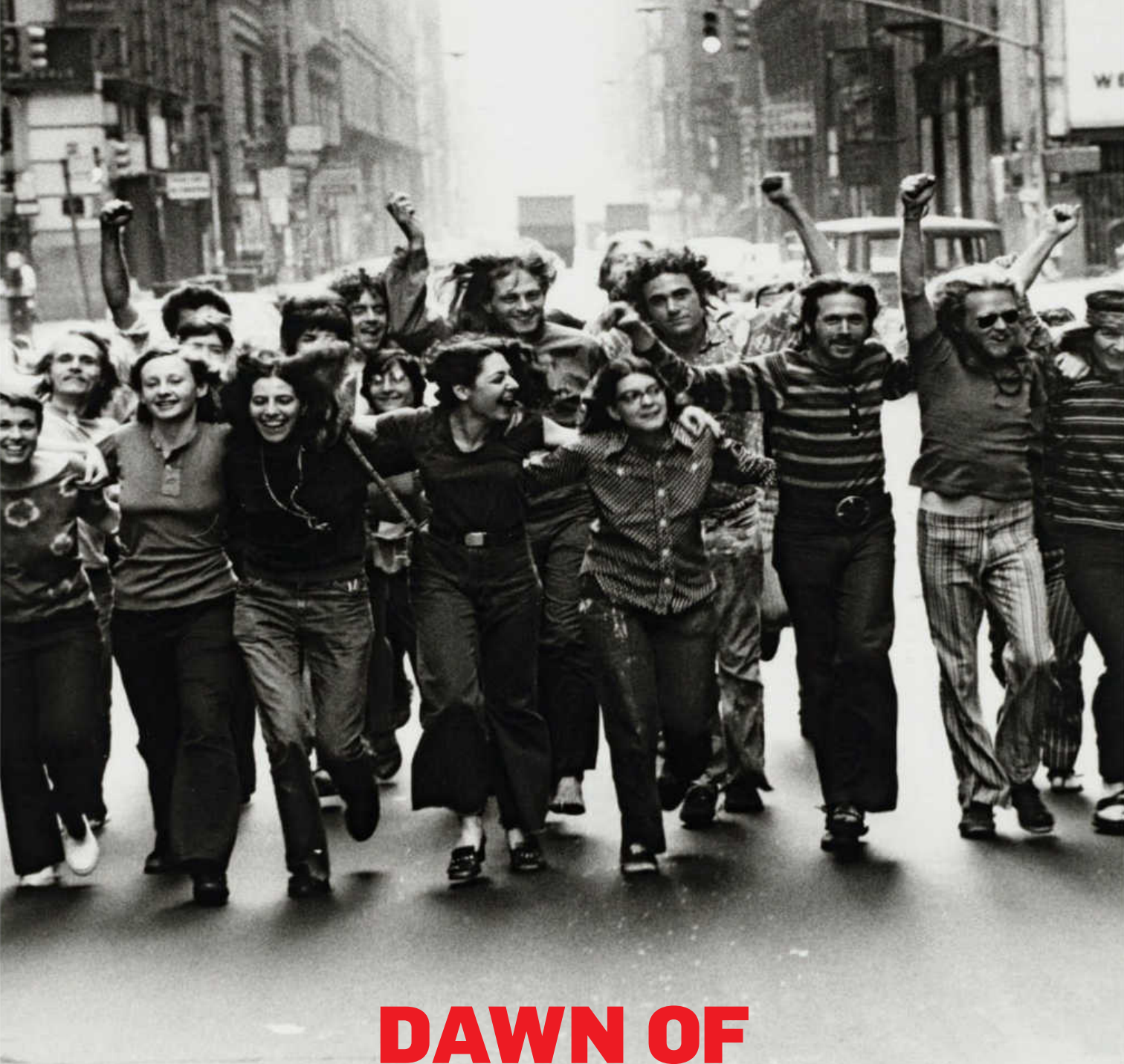
THE VANGUARD: LGTBTS ON THE CUTTING EDGE

# THE ADVOCATE

SINCE 1967

OCTOBER / NOVEMBER 2015

ISSUE 1081



## DAWN OF A REVOLUTION

STONEWALL REVISITED



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## What is STRIBILD?

STRIBILD is a prescription medicine used to treat HIV-1 in adults who have never taken HIV-1 medicines before. STRIBILD can also replace current HIV-1 medicines for some adults who have an undetectable viral load (less than 50 copies/mL of virus in their blood) and whose healthcare provider determines that they meet certain other requirements. STRIBILD combines 4 medicines into 1 pill to be taken once a day with food. STRIBILD is a complete single tablet regimen and should not be used with other HIV-1 medicines.

**STRIBILD does not cure HIV-1 infection or AIDS.** To control HIV-1 infection and decrease HIV-related illnesses you must keep taking STRIBILD. Ask your healthcare provider if you have questions about how to reduce the risk of passing HIV-1 to others. Always practice safer sex and use condoms to lower the chance of sexual contact with body fluids. Never reuse or share needles or other items that have body fluids on them.

## IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

### What is the most important information I should know about STRIBILD?

**STRIBILD can cause serious side effects:**

- **Build-up of an acid in your blood (lactic acidosis),** which is a serious medical emergency. Symptoms of lactic acidosis include feeling very weak or tired, unusual (not normal) muscle pain, trouble breathing, stomach pain with nausea or vomiting, feeling cold especially in your arms and legs, feeling dizzy or lightheaded, and/or a fast or irregular heartbeat.
- **Serious liver problems.** The liver may become large (hepatomegaly) and fatty (steatosis). Symptoms of liver problems include your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice), dark "tea-colored" urine, light-colored bowel movements (stools), loss of appetite for several days or longer, nausea, and/or stomach pain.
- **You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or serious liver problems** if you are female, very overweight (obese), or have been taking STRIBILD for a

long time. In some cases, these serious conditions have led to death. Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any symptoms of these conditions.

- **Worsening of hepatitis B (HBV) infection.** If you also have HBV and stop taking STRIBILD, your hepatitis may suddenly get worse. Do not stop taking STRIBILD without first talking to your healthcare provider, as they will need to monitor your health. STRIBILD is not approved for the treatment of HBV.

### Who should not take STRIBILD?

**Do not take STRIBILD if you:**

- **Take a medicine that contains:** alfuzosin, carbamazepine, cisapride, dihydroergotamine, ergotamine, lovastatin, methylergonovine, midazolam when taken by mouth, phenobarbital, phenytoin, pimozide, rifampin, sildenafil when used for lung problems (Revatio®), simvastatin, triazolam, or the herbal supplement St. John's wort.
- **For a list of brand names for these medicines,** please see the Brief Summary on the following pages.
- **Take any other medicines to treat HIV-1 infection,** or the medicine adefovir (Hepsera®).

### What are the other possible side effects of STRIBILD?

**Serious side effects of STRIBILD may also include:**

- **New or worse kidney problems, including kidney failure.** Your healthcare provider should do regular blood and urine tests to check your kidneys before and during treatment with STRIBILD. If you develop kidney problems, your healthcare provider may tell you to stop taking STRIBILD.
- **Bone problems,** including bone pain or bones getting soft or thin, which may lead to fractures. Your healthcare provider may do tests to check your bones.
- **Changes in body fat** can happen in people taking HIV-1 medicines.
- **Changes in your immune system.** Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any new symptoms after you start taking STRIBILD.

**The most common side effects** of STRIBILD include nausea and diarrhea. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effects that bother you or don't go away.

### What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking STRIBILD?


- **All your health problems.** Be sure to tell your healthcare provider if you have or had any kidney, bone, or liver problems, including hepatitis virus infection.
- **All the medicines you take,** including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. STRIBILD may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how STRIBILD works. Keep a list of all your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist. Do not start any new medicines while taking STRIBILD without first talking with your healthcare provider.
- **If you take hormone-based birth control** (pills, patches, rings, shots, etc).
- **If you take antacids.** Take antacids at least 2 hours before or after you take STRIBILD.
- **If you are pregnant** or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if STRIBILD can harm your unborn baby. Tell your healthcare provider if you become pregnant while taking STRIBILD.
- **If you are breastfeeding** (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed. HIV-1 can be passed to the baby in breast milk. Also, some medicines in STRIBILD can pass into breast milk, and it is not known if this can harm the baby.

**You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit [www.fda.gov/medwatch](http://www.fda.gov/medwatch), or call 1-800-FDA-1088.**

Please see Brief Summary of full Prescribing Information with **important warnings** on the following pages.

\*STRIBILD is a combination of the medicines TRUVADA (emtricitabine and tenofovir disoproxil fumarate), TYBOST (cobicistat), and VITEKTA (elvitegravir).





STRIBILD is a prescription medicine used to treat HIV-1 in adults who have never taken HIV-1 medicines before. STRIBILD can also replace current HIV-1 medicines for some adults who have an undetectable viral load (less than 50 copies/mL of virus in their blood) and whose healthcare provider determines that they meet certain other requirements. STRIBILD does not cure HIV-1 or AIDS.

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## Patient Information

### STRIBILD® (STRY-bild)

(elvitegravir 150 mg/cobicistat 150 mg/emtricitabine 200 mg/tenofovir disoproxil fumarate 300 mg) tablets

Brief summary of full Prescribing Information. For more information, please see the full Prescribing Information, including Patient Information.

### What is STRIBILD?

- **STRIBILD is a prescription medicine** used to treat HIV-1 in adults who have never taken HIV-1 medicines before. STRIBILD can also be used to replace current HIV-1 medicines for some adults who have an undetectable viral load (less than 50 copies/mL of virus in their blood), and have been on the same HIV-1 medicines for at least 6 months and have never failed past HIV-1 treatment, and whose healthcare provider determines that they meet certain other requirements.
- **STRIBILD is a complete HIV-1 medicine** and should not be used with any other HIV-1 medicines.
- **STRIBILD does not cure HIV-1 or AIDS.** You must stay on continuous HIV-1 therapy to control HIV-1 infection and decrease HIV-related illnesses.
- **Ask your healthcare provider about how to prevent passing HIV-1 to others.** Do not share or reuse needles, injection equipment, or personal items that can have blood or body fluids on them. Do not have sex without protection. Always practice safer sex by using a latex or polyurethane condom to lower the chance of sexual contact with semen, vaginal secretions, or blood.

### What is the most important information I should know about STRIBILD?

#### STRIBILD can cause serious side effects, including:

1. **Build-up of lactic acid in your blood (lactic acidosis).** Lactic acidosis can happen in some people who take STRIBILD or similar (nucleoside analogs) medicines. Lactic acidosis is a serious medical emergency that can lead to death. Lactic acidosis can be hard to identify early, because the symptoms could seem like symptoms of other health problems.

**Call your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms which could be signs of lactic acidosis:**

- feel very weak or tired
- have unusual (not normal) muscle pain
- have trouble breathing
- have stomach pain with nausea or vomiting
- feel cold, especially in your arms and legs
- feel dizzy or lightheaded
- have a fast or irregular heartbeat

2. **Severe liver problems.** Severe liver problems can happen in people who take STRIBILD. In some cases, these liver problems can lead to death. Your liver may become large (hepatomegaly) and you may develop fat in your liver (steatosis). **Call your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms of liver problems:**

- your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice)
- dark “tea-colored” urine
- light-colored bowel movements (stools)
- loss of appetite for several days or longer
- nausea
- stomach pain

**You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or severe liver problems if you are female, very overweight (obese), or have been taking STRIBILD for a long time.**

3. **Worsening of Hepatitis B infection.** If you have hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection and take STRIBILD, your HBV may get worse (flare-up) if you stop taking STRIBILD. A “flare-up” is when your HBV infection suddenly returns in a worse way than before.

- Do not run out of STRIBILD. Refill your prescription or talk to your healthcare provider before your STRIBILD is all gone
- Do not stop taking STRIBILD without first talking to your healthcare provider
- If you stop taking STRIBILD, your healthcare provider will need to check your health often and do blood tests regularly for several months to check your HBV infection. Tell your healthcare provider about any new or unusual symptoms you may have after you stop taking STRIBILD

### Who should not take STRIBILD?

#### Do not take STRIBILD if you also take a medicine that contains:

- adefovir (Hepsera®)
- alfuzosin hydrochloride (Uroxatral®)
- carbamazepine (Carbatrol®, Epitol®, Equetro®, Tegretol®, Tegratol-XR®, Teril®)
- cisapride (Propulsid®, Propulsid Quicksolv®)
- ergot-containing medicines, including: dihydroergotamine mesylate (D.H.E. 45®, Migranal®), ergotamine tartrate (Cafergot®, Migergot®, Ergostat®, Medihaler Ergotamine®, Wigraine®, Wigrettes®), and methylergonovine maleate (Ergotrate®, Methergine®)
- lovastatin (Advicor®, Altoprev®, Mevacor®)
- midazolam, when taken by mouth
- phenobarbital (Luminal®)
- phenytoin (Dilantin®, Phenytek®)
- pimozone (Orap®)
- rifampin (Rifadin®, Rifamate®, Rifater®, Rimactane®)
- sildenafil (Revatio®), when used for treating lung problems
- simvastatin (Simcor®, Vytorin®, Zocor®)
- triazolam (Halcion®)
- the herb St. John's wort

**Do not take STRIBILD if you also take any other HIV-1 medicines.**

**STRIBILD is not for use in people who are less than 18 years old.**

## What are the possible side effects of STRIBILD?

### STRIBILD may cause the following serious side effects:

- **See “What is the most important information I should know about STRIBILD?”**
- **New or worse kidney problems, including kidney failure.** Your healthcare provider should do blood and urine tests to check your kidneys before you start and while you are taking STRIBILD. Your healthcare provider may tell you to stop taking STRIBILD if you develop new or worse kidney problems.
- **Bone problems** can happen in some people who take STRIBILD. Bone problems include bone pain, softening or thinning (which may lead to fractures). Your healthcare provider may need to do tests to check your bones.
- **Changes in body fat** can happen in people who take HIV-1 medicine. These changes may include increased amount of fat in the upper back and neck (“buffalo hump”), breast, and around the middle of your body (trunk). Loss of fat from the legs, arms and face may also happen. The exact cause and long-term health effects of these conditions are not known.
- **Changes in your immune system** (Immune Reconstitution Syndrome) can happen when you start taking HIV-1 medicines. Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections that have been hidden in your body for a long time. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you start having any new symptoms after starting your HIV-1 medicine.

### The most common side effects of STRIBILD include:

- Nausea
- Diarrhea

### Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away.

- These are not all the possible side effects of STRIBILD. For more information, ask your healthcare provider.
- Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

## What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking STRIBILD?

### Tell your healthcare provider about all your medical conditions, including:

- If you have or had any kidney, bone, or liver problems, including hepatitis B infection
- If you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if STRIBILD can harm your unborn baby. Tell your healthcare provider if you become pregnant while taking STRIBILD.
  - There is a pregnancy registry for women who take antiviral medicines during pregnancy. The purpose of this registry is to collect information about the health of you and your baby. Talk with your healthcare provider about how you can take part in this registry.
- If you are breastfeeding (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed if you take STRIBILD.
  - You should not breastfeed if you have HIV-1 because of the risk of passing HIV-1 to your baby.

- Two of the medicines in STRIBILD can pass to your baby in your breast milk. It is not known if the other medicines in STRIBILD can pass into your breast milk.
- Talk with your healthcare provider about the best way to feed your baby.

### Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements:

- **Keep a list of all your medicines** and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist. Some medicines may interact with STRIBILD. Do not start any new medicines while you are taking STRIBILD without first talking with your healthcare provider.
- Do not take STRIBILD with any products that contain the herbal supplement St. John’s wort.
- If you take a medicine for indigestion (antacid) that contains aluminum and magnesium hydroxide or calcium carbonate, take it at least 2 hours before or after you take STRIBILD.

### Keep STRIBILD and all medicines out of reach of children.

This Brief Summary summarizes the most important information about STRIBILD. If you would like more information, talk with your healthcare provider. You can also ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for information about STRIBILD that is written for health professionals, or call 1-800-445-3235 or go to [www.STRIBILD.com](http://www.STRIBILD.com).

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**ON THE COVER** Gay Liberation Front Poster Image by Peter Hujar, 1970.  
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SO, WHERE DO  
YOU WANT TO GO?



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## Editor's Letter

**A**s we put this issue to bed, the trailer for *Stonewall* was released, and comments and headlines flew around the Web accusing director Roland Emmerich of whitewashing and trans erasure. None of the detractors, at this stage, had seen the film. The film might be great and all-inclusive and true. Or it might not. But at that moment, all of us who decried the content of the film were literally, by definition, *prejudiced*. We were raving on about a one-minute-long marketing tool, and a marketing tool bedeviling to filmmakers who don't make them.

Soon enough we'll know more about what's actually in the film. In the meantime, the uproar is instructive. Here we have the confluence of two conditions that primed us for protest: the legendary importance of the riots, and the mechanisms of hair-trigger social-media-fueled outrage.

It was especially bad timing that the *Stonewall* trailer came out the very day that USC's Annenberg School put out a study that delineated the overwhelming predominance of white, straight men in film roles. With hashtags, pitchforks, and boycott petitions at the ready, we leapt in. We're all now primed to lash out at injustice, inspired at least in part by the very anger that led to the Stonewall riots. Such anger can be very useful if properly deployed, but as I write this, none of us can say with certainty if the "how dare you, Roland Emmerich?" comments are a warranted or good or useful deployment of anger.

In David Carter's book *Stonewall: The Riots That Sparked the Gay Revolution* (just one of many accounts, some conflicting), he describes the atmosphere that night. The patrons of the bar had been put through a series of recent raids, and they were at a breaking point when the police raided just after 1 a.m. on Saturday, June 28, 1969.

Drag queens had been subject to humiliation in repeated raids, ushered over to policewomen for "examination" until they were forced to acknowledge, "All right, honey, I'm a man." That night, they were not complying with orders to congregate in the bathroom. One drag queen hit a cop with her purse when being led outside, and she was beaten with a baton. A tall, butch lesbian resisted police and fought with cops for several minutes; as she was forced into a police car, she cried out for help from the already-evicted gay men gathered outside. Her pleas were the flashpoint for rioting.

Actual photos of the nights of rioting are scarce. (One of the few images is on page 61 and shows homeless "street kids" who slept in Christopher Park nearby, and who found a refuge at the Stonewall Inn, being pushed back by police.) And testimonials vary: Who, among the queer people living in New York then, wouldn't want to claim



they'd been there that very night?

But so many of us were represented there those nights: gay men, lesbians, gender non-conforming people, black, Latino, white, the well-heeled, the homeless. We can all be proud of the Stonewall riots. And in the 47 swirling, heady years since then, Stonewall has become the mythic, Arthurian stone from which each of our communities is pulling a sword—proof of our claim to a heritage that includes that transformative night. But there is room for all of us to claim it.

No single movie nor any one book can completely tell the story of the riots. But by preemptively decrying a movie without a firm basis for doing so, do we risk an outcome in which fewer—not more—movies about LGBT history are made? I know that's not the primary issue here. We will speak our truths, and the consequences will flow.

But if *Stonewall* sucks, let's make another, and another. Whose permission do we need?

Matthew Breen, **EDITOR IN CHIEF**

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**Bruce Benderson** is a novelist, essayist, translator, and journalist. He is the author of a memoir, *The Romanian: Story of an Obsession*, winner of France's prestigious Prix de Flore, as well as the novels *User* and *Pacific Agony*. A complete collection of his stories will be published by ITNA Press in November. This year he permanently stopped looking for love (page 26).



**Sunnive Brydum** is an award-winning journalist and the managing editor of *The Advocate's* digital platform. Originally from Colorado, she and her spouse now live in Los Angeles with their two dogs and a cat. She was thrilled to discover a local gay barbershop just blocks from her home, and will now be turning to Ninth Chapter (page 50) for tight fades and community.



**Matthew Hays** is a Montreal-based journalist and author. His articles have appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, *Vice*, *Cineaste*, and *The Daily Beast*. His book, *The View from Here: Conversations with Gay and Lesbian Filmmakers* won a 2008 Lambda Award. He is co-editor of the Queer Film Classics book series. His set visit to *Stonewall* begins on page 60.



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Caitlyn Jenner's story is an important one. But stories like hers alone cannot sustain a movement of racially and culturally diverse trans men and women seeking community and visibility.

Dr. Jay Richards

**THE "OPEN MARKET"** of trans activists and supporters is that we spend so much time negotiating two-faced, "between-the-lines" and limited political action that we no longer present ourselves as activists. What is a community space of alliance for those who are the least comfortable with public awareness, such as with the "transmy way" a Rife sees the use of a word that seems "aligned with oppression and victimization as a choice that the US "pathologizing" of transsexuals who are critical of trans people, the criminalization of trans women from the Middle East, trans people's poverty, etc.

Anything done by or for some people, or any issue that interests some with genuine & heartfelt attached. The institutions are moral entities and up of actions, and the values are central of the mission, and the values are interconnected with the mission.

Internal monologues are not unique to any group of people, but the faculty is more polished among those people that themselves are being studied primarily by people in all corners of the social justice movement.

The critical is just as bad. If not worse, when aimed at fellow race people. When I'd trace women were featured on the cover of *U.S. Weekly* magazine, after those women published essays on the racist/sexist beauty standards it perpetuated. When *One Life* I became the first race woman listed on a writer on a high profile site, *Amateur's Perspective*, another race woman wrote that she was the most powerful (black) woman didn't get a "bad-ass" title.

big wave women." When I started a website solely for sharing positive experiences, Michelle Francisco, one of the first contributors I recruited said "Welcome to the site for those of us who aren't 'bigger'." And when the first issue (2012) was published, a lot of 100 and overers noticed, some of the readers' (I'm assuming people were about 100 years old) I was not including them.

**IT IS POSSIBLE** as long as the next batch of questions doesn't come.

With the battle for gay and lesbian rights on a seemingly never-ending path to victory in the United States, both the media and LGBT organizations have been somewhat lulled into a lull. And there is a lot of people to point to that can be seen as having caused this lull. One of the most prominent is the *San Francisco Chronicle*, which, among LGBT supporters and those people not informed, inspired, or enlightened by the decision to eliminate "gender identity" from the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, offered up in 2007 a series of glowing letters, stories or passing lines on its website on the constitutionality of non-discrimination (3/24/07).

Now after two years, anyone flipping back the archives might find LGBT unemployment, HIV rates, lack of health care, police harassment, negative media portrayals, and countless more that can be seen as being disproportionately represented in such a way.

It was identified only a number of direct hatreds attributed was viewed as more rights. Social media had allowed trans people to find one another the same fashion, build supportive communities, and become educated on their bodies in 2012. Some Black people were right-handed on Twitter, and the first trans trans women were telling and supporting each other in a public space. The groundwork was laid, and the media valued its trans people, largely ignoring not sexual orientation with gender identity. The further educated people may be, but the more so-called

Nearly 17 million people tuned in live to hear one such story, that of Captain Brown. The brave Christian heroism inspired off at sea: in 1991, if you have no money, have no insurance, no money, the days can identify as the golden the world has never been there. The attention could be a spiritual act.

presented them with some discussion about how to use algorithms more effectively, and some of the problems that arise. The problem of how to find the shortest path from one point to another, over a network, is a problem that arises in many contexts, such as in the design of computer networks, and in the design of transportation networks. The problem of how to find the shortest path from one point to another, over a network, is a problem that arises in many contexts, such as in the design of computer networks, and in the design of transportation networks. The problem of how to find the shortest path from one point to another, over a network, is a problem that arises in many contexts, such as in the design of computer networks, and in the design of transportation networks.

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Editor-at-large Diane Anderson-Minshall wrote about her early understanding of prostitution as a means of self-sufficiency. Aje Eja commented, **"A wonderful piece. It is beyond me why the state thinks it is right to police adult people's sex lives?"** Reader Angela D. Ledford wrote, "I found this piece very thoughtful and important (especially the critique of the LGBT mainstream). However, I have a couple of reservations. One is that there is too easy a bifurcation drawn between those who embrace the sex work and seek to decriminalize it and those who want to deny its existence... I think if we are going to have a real conversation about this... we have to acknowledge that there is incredibly rich and important terrain between the two. For example, legalization historically has not, in and of itself, de-stigmatized communities/behaviors."





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## A LONELY CABIN

The Log Cabin Republicans strive for legitimacy within a party that worked tirelessly against marriage equality. Can they replicate past successes battling “religious freedom” in red states?

BY PETER DELVECCHIO

**A** mention of Log Cabin Republicans in some queer quarters will elicit a response similar to the invocation of Jews for Jesus or Uncle Tom: a derisive snort. Or worse.

LCR celebrated nationwide marriage equality with the rest of the LGBT community, after having worked hard to bring it about. But the party to which it pledges allegiance has pitched a rearguard action against marriage for years, surrendering no ditch without a skirmish.

The GOP and the greater conservative movement sometimes seem to want little to do with LCR. To wit: While some GOP presidential contenders have met with LCR, they all condemned the United States Supreme Court’s marriage equality decision in June, some in floridly apocalyptic terms; most immediately seized

the banner of the next battle, “religious freedom.” LCR finally attended the GOP national convention as a recognized group in 2012, yet anti-LGBT rhetoric peppered the party’s platform, and LCR was still denied full inclusion at the influential Conservative Political Action Conference, settling this year for participation in a single panel with no booth on the floor. LCR was disinvited from June’s Western Conservative Summit, its \$250 deposit returned. And last year, the Texas GOP denied LCR’s chapter a booth at the annual convention, citing an obscure rule that Texas LCR chairman Jeff Davis says is routinely overlooked for others.

Yet LCR soldiers on for both LGBT rights and Republicanism, seemingly immune to the humiliation of such rejection. With marriage equality legally settled, and with

the ban on transgender participation in the military on a path similar to that of “don’t ask, don’t tell,” one main issue confronting LGBT political campaigners, including LCR, is whether they can successfully head off or defeat “religious freedom restoration acts” (RFRAs) coming out of red-state legislatures and statehouses.

LCR has scored victories in the past. The group was founded in California to combat the ultimately unsuccessful 1978 Briggs Initiative, which would have barred gays and lesbians from teaching in public schools. The organization helped quash the Federal Marriage Amendment, introduced in Congress in 2004 and endorsed by President George W. Bush. And in 2010, a California federal judge ruled DADT unconstitutional in a lawsuit filed by LCR; many political watchers credit that victory with paving a path to DADT’s repeal.

But can LCR replicate its political successes against RFRAs? And does it want to?

The establishment of such RFRA policies is unlikely at the federal level, or in blue states like California. The assault will come from the South and the Midwest—and what LCR can do there is unclear. One problem is the absence of chapters in critical GOP-leaning states, including Missis-

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issippi, Arkansas, Missouri, Tennessee, Kentucky, West Virginia, Indiana, Idaho, Montana, North and South Dakota, Wyoming, Nebraska, and Kansas. LCR's Alabama chapter shut down sometime after 2010, the year of the last entry on its Facebook page.

Nevertheless non-Republican advocates in conservative states with LCR chapters view the organization as a valuable ally.

"Within the Texas legislature, they are an incredibly effective voice," says Equality Texas's Daniel Williams. He credits LCR with helping head off certain anti-LGBT bills in the latest legislative session.

Equality Utah executive director Troy Williams (no relation) says that "LCR have been instrumental in establishing relationships with both Governor Gary Herbert and his predecessor Jon Huntsman."

LCR is "going to be important to move the needle," says Equality North Carolina executive director Chris Sgro. But the extent to which local chapters depend on the national organization's health is uncertain.

Jimmy LaSalvia founded the now-defunct Kentucky LCR chapter in 2004, later served at the national level, and ultimately left LCR to found GOProud, a since-disbanded Republican LGBT group. LaSalvia quit the GOP last year. His book, *No Hope: Why I Left the GOP (and You Should Too)*, comes out in October.

LaSalvia claims LCR is "hanging by a thread," that the national office once had seven employees but is now down to executive director Gregory T. Angelo and an intern, and that membership has fallen since around 2004, which he calls the group's "heyday."

Angelo disputes all this, responding in an email that since he took over in 2013, "our rolls have grown, donations have increased, and our finances are in the best shape they've been in nearly a decade." Contrary information is "pure speculation," he writes. LCR membership numbers cannot be verified; Angelo did not respond to a request to describe "a standard by which you determine if someone is a 'member,' " citing only the "well over 40,000 people in our database."

Jeff Davis says there are dues-paying members of Texas city chapters, as opposed to names on mailing lists, but he could supply numbers only for Austin, where there are 10 such members.

Just how RFRAs might manifest legislatively, and how willing LCR will be to fight certain types of measures, will also matter.

Robin Fretwell Wilson, director of the University of Illinois College of Law's Family Law and Policy Program, who favors balancing religious and LGBT interests, says that she expects no explosion of RFRAs, opining that conservatives have learned from the Indiana debacle, in which a RFRA was passed but quickly modified after the threat of significant business-interest boycotts against the state.

Out former GOP presidential hopeful Fred Karger disagrees with Wilson, saying that he expects new RFRAs, pointing to "groups like the National Organization for Marriage [and] Family Research Council that depend on fighting the LGBT community" for any semblance of relevance. Likewise, Daniel Williams expects new anti-LGBT bills in Texas.



LCR executive director Gregory Angelo with DC chapter members

While the exact contours of the "religious freedom" movement remain hazy, it seems certain there will be such a movement, and that it will occupy legislatures and courts for years.

Those who've fought against marriage equality and LGBT rights for decades are not going to simply wither away in the face of shifting public opinion or legal parity for LGBTs. While the exact contours of the "religious freedom" movement remain hazy, it seems certain there will be such a movement, and that it will occupy legislatures and courts for years.

LCR's opposition to laws permitting government officials to opt out of their duties seems solid. "This notion that clerks, public servants, should be able to deny marriage licenses specifically to same-sex couples is beyond the pale," Angelo says.

But things get murkier for private businesses refusing to "participate" in same-sex weddings. Angelo warns against getting "bogged down in making the post-marriage-equality battle one of a fight against mom-and-pop businesses," referring to "these ridiculous battles involving bake my cake, photograph my wedding."

LCR "would support reasonable religious accommodations in non-discrimination laws," Angelo says, and he believes small-business exemptions already exist at the federal level. But, according to Lambda Legal's Jenny Pizer, Angelo is probably confusing employment protections, which include certain such exemptions, with public accommodations statutes, which do not.

Asked why a business shouldn't be able to refuse to bake a cake for, say, a black couple, Angelo describes "a delineation...between refusing service for an event and refusing service to someone simply because of who they are."

This position places LCR pretty squarely at odds with most LGBT advocates, and it might limit LCR's value in the "religious freedom" struggle.

Going forward, Angelo says, "there's a lot more to be done in a post-marriage world, including passage of everything from LGBT civil rights legislation to tax code reform to working to combat human rights abuses against the LGBT community abroad. Also, as long as there are gay Democrats, there will always be Log Cabin Republicans." ♦

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# WHAT'S THE USE OF BEING GAY?

Centuries of studies have tried to examine the value of homosexuality to human beings as a species.

BY BRENDEN SHUCART

**“W**hy am I gay?” The question reverberates through every homosexual at least once in his or her life. While potentially confounding as a personal question, when one applies a little science, this question becomes an intriguing evolutionary puzzle. Homosexual behavior has been observed in more than 1,500 species. If the point of life, from an evolutionary standpoint, is to pass on useful genes, why is anyone gay?

Humans have been trying to answer that question since we began applying scientific principles to human sexuality. Unfortunately the first of those humans were Victorians who considered the “nameless offense of great enormity” so dangerous to society that they regularly sent gay men to the gallows or locked them away forever. The Victorians passed their prejudices on to later generations. As late as 1971–16 years before homosexuality would be struck from the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM)—a study titled “Behavioral Changes Due to Overpopulation in Mice” included homosexuality in a list of “catastrophic events” alongside increased mortality among the young, lack of maternal functions, and cannibalism.

Others questioned whether homosexuality had a genetic component and even (gasp!) evolutionary benefits. In charting the variations between hetero-

and homo development and physiology, we’ve learned that gay men show significant variation in the size and structure of INAH3 (a part of the brain involved in regulating sexual behavior); gays tend to produce higher levels of the “social” hormone progesterone; and curiously, the likelihood that one of her sons will be gay increases by 33% with each male child a woman gives birth to.

In 2004 an Italian research team led by Andrea Camperio-Ciani postulated that homosexuality could be explained through Richard Dawkins’ theory of “sexually antagonistic selection” wherein a set of genes might increase the procreational competitiveness of one gender while diminishing the other’s chances.

A series of studies which relied heavily on self-reporting found that the female relatives of gay men tend to be more fertile; have fewer gynecological issues; are more extroverted, funnier, happier, and more relaxed; and have fewer family problems or social anxieties than females who don’t have gay relatives. “In other words, compared to the others, [they’re] perfect for a male,” Camperio-Ciani told journalists in 2008, with what was almost certainly a total lack of irony.

This year, a study was published with the Royal Society that applied sexually antagonistic selection theories to the lives of fruit flies. Essentially robots built to eat,

fly, and fuck, fruit flies are utterly lacking in cultural influence. Using some old-fashioned inbreeding, Jessica L. Hoskins, Michael G. Ritchie, and Nathan W. Bailey found an undeniable link between same-sex behavior in male flies and an increase in the fecundity of females from the same line. It is an affirmative answer to the “evolutionary benefit” question, but hardly one that satisfies emotionally. Besides casting homosexuality as the by-product of more evolutionarily useful genetic phenomena, the Royal Society study doesn’t examine the potential benefits of homosexuality.

Regarding homosexuality as population control, Dawkins has stated unequivocally that nature doesn’t “do” population limits.

Another theory holds that “gay uncles” provide benefit by being more likely to look after nieces and nephews. The homosexual *fa’afafine* of Samoan culture are more likely to exhibit such avuncular behavior than their heterosexual siblings, yet this behavior has not been seen in Japanese or American gays.

My favorite theory envisions the gay man as bridge builder and peacemaker. Citing examples from such far-flung settings as pre-colonial Hawaii, medieval Florence, and feudal Japan, anthropologist R.C. Kirkpatrick has theorized that gay sex can help build relationships and form alliances for both individuals and families. It fits with what we know about the physiological traits of gay men and the environmental realities which increase the likelihood of homosexual behavior—large families already dense with aggressive males and overcrowded living situations with limited resources are both scenarios where more cooperative, socially inclined males could come in handy. ♦

# ON SCREEN: THE MIDDLE EAST

Three new documentaries reveal precarious, uncertain, and inscrutable queer existence in Syria, Israel, and Saudi Arabia.



## A SINNER IN MECCA

In an act of potentially deadly defiance, a gay filmmaker questions and reclaims his faith while exposing Saudi Arabia's violent conservatism.

For many, Mecca is a city in Saudi Arabia shrouded in mystery: impenetrable, unknowable. But for devout Muslims, the hajj, a pilgrimage to Mecca, one of Islam's holiest sites, is a journey one must make in their time on earth.

Photographing or videotaping the hajj is strictly forbidden, so to see the swirling masses at the Kaaba, the sacred cuboid building in the middle of Mecca, as seen in Parvez Sharma's intensely personal documentary, *A Sinner in Mecca*, gives audiences a voyeuristic thrill. We feel the claustrophobia, the danger, the violence as the camera—strapped secretly to Sharma's neck—approaches the sacred object.

Many fundamentalist Muslims already revile Sharma, a proud gay man whose 2007 film, *A Jihad for Love*, questioned Islam's treatment of LGBT people. Though homosexuality is punishable by death in Saudi Arabia, Sharma decided to go back in the closet—both as gay and as a filmmaker—to get the visa and permissions to make the hajj. Like a carefully constructed thriller, the film shows the tension that exists as Sharma makes his way toward the Kaaba; as irrational as it is, we wonder if he will be struck down for his impertinence to defile this hallowed object. He finally touches it, and the world doesn't end. He feels relief, but he's not out of danger yet. Sharma is ultimately

traumatized by the experience.

The film is more than his struggle with reconciling his faith with his sexuality: it's an open challenge to Wahhabism, the ultraconservative movement within Sunni Islam practiced by the majority of Muslims in Saudi Arabia. And it's this political examination and challenge that has prompted death threats and hate speech directed at Sharma, and required extra airport-style security at many of the screenings in North America and Britain.

"Conservative Muslims are organizing themselves and coming with only one purpose in mind: to publicly attack and shame the film," Sharma says. "At a U.K. screening, it was a group of Saudi women who condemned the film in public. I tried to defend it. I have experienced hostility face to face, but this time was different. I crumbled. They followed me out of the theater. It was an awful experience."

During the Q&A session at the film's first screening at HotDocs in Toronto, a young gay Muslim man was inspired to come out, thanking Sharma for making the film for all other gay Muslims who may never be able to make the hajj—but that experience was followed by hostile questions. When *Sinner* screened at Outfest in Los Angeles this summer, where it was awarded the Best Documentary Feature, a group of Iranians



arrived to attack Sharma's motivations for making the film.

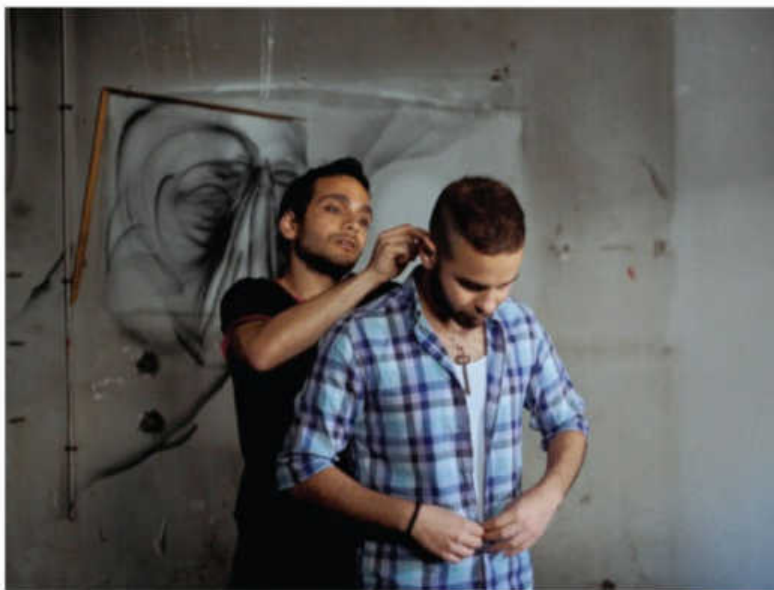
"They said I was fooling people because I dared to film the experience, and filming and prayer don't go together, so I shouldn't claim any sense of religiosity," he says. "But being a filmmaker and a religious Muslim, I can divide my brain into halves, and it's my natural instincts to film. No way I wasn't going to document the most important journey in my life."

Eager to reach as many viewers as possible, Sharma hands out DVDs to people who ask so they can organize screenings in Muslim world capitals. The film will be released in New York on September 4 and in Los Angeles on September 11, which will make it eligible for awards consideration, and Sharma says Netflix will stream the film. He hopes to reach a wide Muslim audience so that they can help change the religion that "has no resemblance to Islam as it was originally intended."

"People are reacting very strongly. But most are reacting to a film they haven't even seen." —JERRY PORTWOOD



Clockwise, from left: Parvez Sharma overlooking the Kaaba in Mecca; Khader Abu-Seif and Naeem Jiryes in *Oriented*; still from *A Gay Girl in Damascus*



## ORIENTED

Caught between worlds, gay Palestinians search for a fulfilling sense of identity.

For 15 months, filmmaker Jake Witzenfeld, a straight British Jew, followed three gay Palestinians—Khader Abu-Seif, Fadi Daeem, and Naeem Jiryes—as they lived their lives in Tel Aviv. Israel's 1.7 million Arab citizens account for 20% of the country's population, but as members of this large minority, Abu-Seif, Daeem, and Jiryes are caught between worlds, straddling rigid divides. They feel themselves to be less Palestinian than those in the Occupied Territories, and though they hold Israeli passports, their ethnic identity resists the label "Israeli." They live in Tel Aviv, a haven for gay life in the Middle East, but that link to their fellow LGBT Israelis is tenuous.

Witzenfeld initially sought to explore the confused space occupied by gay Arab-Isrealis, to learn how young, progressive Palestinians orient themselves within their society. For them, even the simplest decisions—whether to go out to an Arab or Jewish club, whether a guy is too Zionist to date, whether to pre-drink to Hebrew or Arabic music—carry undue weight.

But then, war. Captured on film, the devastating Gaza conflict of the summer of 2014 laid bare the precarious position of Palestinians generally in Israel. "At night, lots of right-wing radicals would run past our apartment screaming, 'Death to the Arabs!' And you understand why people [Israeli Jews] are so irritated," Abu-Seif says. "They don't want to live their lives afraid" of rockets from Gaza, of kidnappings, he explains. "But from the other side, they aren't aware that they are terrorizing me, that they terrorize Arabs living inside Israel." The war also proved to Abu-Seif that his sexual and national identities are ultimately inseparable. "To define myself just on my sexuality would be great, but I cannot. Every time there is a war, every time something happens politically, automatically, all I am is an Arab. The enemy."

*Oriented* (go to [OrientedFilm.com](http://OrientedFilm.com) for screening schedule) doesn't offer answers. It aims to unsettle and confuse, to shake off preconceived beliefs and inspire conversation. "I want *Oriented* to be the kick in the knees that gets people talking," Witzenfeld says, "because we need it." —J.M.

## A GAY GIRL IN DAMASCUS

While on the cusp of revolution, Syrians searched for Amina, a young lesbian abducted by her government. But Amina wasn't real.

When Amina Abdallah Arraf al Omari, a gay Syrian-American blogger and activist, was reportedly abducted by government forces in Syria in 2011, the international community took keen, almost obsessive, notice. Spurred on by the tireless efforts of her Canadian girlfriend, Sandra Bagaria, to secure media coverage, Amina's was the perfect human-interest story. An openly gay Muslim woman in the Middle East whose blog, "A Gay Girl in Damascus," documented the early stages of the revolution in Syria, she became the progressive face of what the Arab Spring was trying to accomplish.

But there was a problem: Amina didn't exist. Her online persona was, in fact, created by a middle-aged, straight white American man from Georgia.

In the documentary *A Gay Girl in Damascus: The Amina Profile*, filmmaker Sophie Deraspe teams up with Bagaria to unravel the twisted series of events in this strange saga. "This is a film, and we're at about the 20-minute mark," Deraspe recalls telling Bagaria in 2011. "More has to come." At the time of the conversation, however, Bagaria was far from ready to get involved. She had just been the subject of one of the most widely reported cases of "catfishing," and the public reveal of Amina's true identity had left her deeply humiliated. Her early pleas for help found answers in the State Department, NPR, *The Guardian*, Amnesty International, and a number of individual activists, many of whom diverted their attention from the real atrocities being committed in the country. Duped herself, Bagaria had unwittingly dragged many along with her.

The film, now available via the Sundance Now Doc Club ([DocClub.com](http://DocClub.com)), serves as a warning in this Internet age, but it is also a powerful tribute to the people fighting for liberty in Syria. "I knew it was going to be a lot about the contemporary world," Deraspe says, "about sexual identity, the media, how we connect with each other romantically and across cultures, but I didn't expect to learn the impact it had on Syrian people. I didn't know that actual Syrian people had been looking for Amina, that they had exposed themselves, revealed themselves to the authorities by actively trying to help a woman they thought was in danger. The Amina affair, it hurt a lot of people." —JAMES McDONALD



## GOODNIGHT MANHATTAN

A breakup left **Bruce Benderson** to contemplate the post-Manhattan place where he'd ultimately live and die.

**W**hen you hit that great brick wall that hopefully breaks through to heaven, where will you be? My dear friend and mentor, novelist and linguist Ursule Molinaro, had her “brick wall” all planned out. A “graduate” of the Nazi-run prison of Fresnes in France for hiding a Jewish couple, she decided forever after to escape all institutions. Hospitals were at the top of that list. Making her future departure foolproof and pill-enabled didn’t prevent her from conjecturing endings that could happen before her well-planned exit. Once I flagged down a New York taxi for the two of us. To the dangerous swerves of the clumsy cabbie she conjured the following: What would happen to us if we left this level together in the company of this whistling, gap-toothed Haitian chatting on a cell phone and his coconut-oil-infused cab? Would it somehow entangle our afterlives with his? I don’t know. What I do know is that it matters where you die because that’s also where you’ve been living.

Such conjectures never concerned me until July 2 of my 40th summer in Manhattan. That was the day in 2014 when a substance-fueled boyfriend with whom I had foolishly assumed I would spend the rest of my life peremptorily dumped me. Gazing back upon decades of sexual encounters numbering in the thousands, including 11 failed “love affairs,” I asked that Peggy Lee question: “Is that all there is?”

I was sitting in my spacious East Village apartment when I faced that issue, among mostly midcentury furnishings and original art by friends. I gazed at the several books I’d published that had all finally found their way to the remainder table. My eye strayed to the oversize flat screen and my hard-drive collec-

tions of over 2,000 films. I studied the walls cleverly painted in an array of Technicolor hues inspired by my favorite films.

No, I did not want to die here.

**I** was born and raised in the do-you-really-call-it-a-city of Syracuse, a land-bound enclave so median that it had become a national center for market research product testing as I grew up. So brutal were the winters that snow in May was no occasion for comment. So conservative was our upper-middle-class Republican neighborhood that children barely set foot on its manicured front lawns. Sidewalks were few that knew the footprints of anyone but the mailman. When the sun fell and the tastefully retro streetlamps blinked on, the empty lanes looked like footpaths in the tonier sections of Forest Lawn Cemetery.

I suppose I should admit that I’m even old enough to have graduated from my segregated high school before busing changed it in 1969. Our white-kid dress code was rigid. The principal stood in the hallways with a ruler to measure hemlines and sent any girl whose skirt was more than one inch above the knee home to change. First to don an olive army jacket, round-framed glasses, and a “Jewfro,” I’d made a vow by junior year to escape my origins and dump my provincial upstate accent. By 1974, after a four-year hippie hiatus in San Francisco, I became a confirmed New Yorker.

In 2001, my brother and I inherited the family house after my mother’s death at 98. I couldn’t wait to turn it into cash. Bro bought me out, and I used the money to get more notches on my belt of promiscuity throughout four countries in Western Europe. Then

A complete collection of Bruce Benderson’s stories, *Urban Gothic*, will be published this winter by ITNA Press.



I came back to New York for another 13 years. When 2014 hit and the brooding boyfriend coldly split, I suddenly realized how old I was. I also realized I had used up all that the city had to offer. Was that why I found myself hoisting a giant Victorinox suitcase onto the racks of an unreliable Amtrak headed for Syracuse on Oct. 14, 2014? Why was I bringing so much with me?

To say I stayed a long time is an understatement. It is now August 2015, and I'm still upstate. Roughing out one of the worst winters in history without a car, I figured the supermarket was a mere five-mile round-trip walk through snowdrifts and howling winds. I had a lot else to keep me busy, too. Six months previous, I'd been hired at a discount rate to translate an award-winning French biography of director Jean Renoir. The thing is 1,000 pages, for gawd's sake, and the type is small. After a couple of months of tackling it and cleaning out a 10-year collection of take-home hospital inhalers and those weird yellow circular hospital wash basins my parents had come home with in the last years of their lives, I set up a couple of old TVs from childhood with signal converters and rabbit ears. Then I settled into my routine of translating, punctuated by twice-daily viewings of *Perry Mason* over the air on MeTV. I rose early, and mornings were never wasted. The first hour, over a Keurig cup of coffee, I spent bawling and cursing my ex. (Still doing it, too.)

Only now have I fully realized what kept me in the town I'd made every effort to escape. In the first place, every street in big bad New York City still reminds me of the pitiless person who has destroyed

In friendships with the people of small cities, there is no complicated subtext.

They actually mean what they say and do what they say they will.

my chances for love. I can't pass a McDonald's without remembering the sweltering day in June I waited two hours in front of its Delancey Street location for him to come from Brooklyn and "discuss our relationship." Turns out he'd gotten arrested that day for having an open can of beer on the street. I frantically called every hospital, as he was calling his best friend instead of me.

Knowing I wasn't at the top of the list even in Central Booking set the tone for that summer. It included the temporary loss of that parade of 20-something, attractive, gay would-be writers who I'd thought were enthusiastically connecting me to the younger generation. They laughed at my jokes. However, the youth connection stopped abruptly all last summer as they flocked to shares on Fire Island. Apparently there wasn't room for me. My only consolation was being saved from having to appear in front of them in a bathing suit. I think you call what they are "fair-weather friends." My only companion that entire summer was Turner Classic Movies and my broken heart. TCM was comforting because of the childhood era it projected. Kind of like having Mommy and Daddy dug up and placed handily in the corner.

I could go on about the many things that disappoint aging gay men in the context of city life. Instead I'd like to list some of the benefits of the provincial lifestyle. One trustworthy long-term friend whom I'd taken to the senior prom is still in Syracuse. In getting to know her again, I rediscovered something very exotic for a New Yorker. In friendships with the people of small cities, there is no complicated subtext. They actually mean what they say and do what they say they will. When my friend agrees to spend an evening together, there isn't the slightest chance in the world of getting a text saying she decided to go to a gallery opening instead. As for the rare friendly overtures from those I have met up here, I can be fairly certain they haven't researched me on Google first and aren't hoping I can connect them with a dealer or publisher.

The best aspect of all of provincial life, however, only showed itself with the spring thaw. It's the land, and the rich earth of which it is composed. One spring day, while sipping my Keurig and surveying my mother's sad, weed-overgrown rose-of-Sharon-and-daffodil garden, a strange power overtook me. It sent me to the dust-laden garage in search of a hoe that hadn't been touched for more than a decade. As I dug into the moist earth, checking arms and ankles for signs of deer ticks periodically, a wonderful sense of reconnection to the world was born. The results of this revelation climaxed in July, with a burst of zinnias grown from seed, a newly planted Japanese maple, a hydrangea, and an indigo plant. Not in a million years could I have imagined wisecracking, snarky, story-crafting, international me finding gentle ecstasy in working in a garden. But the best thing of all is that even if the care and love you lavish on the kingdom of flora does not reach its goal and the plants all disappoint you, they don't expect you to take it personally. ♦



Bruce Benderson at age 19 with his girlfriend in upstate New York



Above: *A Moment's Pleasure* #2, 2007. Below: *Le leçon d'amour*, 2008.



## MICKALENE THOMAS

Though her work has been shown in countless exhibitions worldwide, Mickalene Thomas was a student at Yale when she first began taking pictures of herself and her mother. The large-scale portraits in *Muse: Mickalene Thomas Photographs* (Aperture) which publishes this autumn, combines aspects of classical odalisque paintings with those of fashion photography of the 1970s "Black is Beautiful"-era (when her mother was a model), among other influences, to examine race, sexuality, the artist's gaze, and the construction of images. **MATTHEW BREEN**



## BLAME IT ON THE QUEERS

Catastrophes caused by LGBTs, according to the professional outrage brigade

### Charleston Shootings

"[People shouldn't] jump to conclusions [that the shooting was] some sort of racial hate crime. [Rather, it is result of] growing hostility and antipathy to Christianity and what this stands for, the biblical worldview about sexual morality and other things."

—E.W. JACKSON, FOX NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

### California's Drought

"We've got a state that, over and over again, will go against the word of God, that will continually take positions on marriage and abortion...that are just completely opposed to the Scriptures...there very likely could be a drought component to this judgment."

—BILL KOENIG, WORLD WATCH DAILY

### Bad Fashion Choices

"They're literally trying to collapse our Western civilization...I'm telling you, we're going to look up and we're going to have boys going to the girls' bathroom...We're going to have men walking around in bottomless pants."

—STACY SWIMP, ANTI-LGBT ACTIVIST

### Something Worse than ISIS

"The runaway judiciary is a bigger threat to the United States than ISIS. Liberal judges have done [more] harm to our country and our constitution than Al Qaeda."

—CHIP BEEKER, ALABAMA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSIONER

### Gay Marriage for Kindergartners

"[The Department of Education will soon be telling kids,] 'Hey, you need to experiment as a kindergartner with whether you're male or female. You need to, like, have some experiments and go out and have same-sex relationships.'"

—MAT STAVER, LIBERTY COUNSEL





Photos of 2012 – 2014 celebrity participants.



# VOICES ON POINT

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COMPLERA is a prescription medicine for adults who have never taken HIV-1 medicines before and who have no more than 100,000 copies/mL of virus in their blood. COMPLERA can also replace current HIV-1 medicines for some adults who have an undetectable viral load (less than 50 copies/mL) and whose healthcare provider determines that they meet certain other requirements. COMPLERA combines 3 medicines into 1 pill to be taken once a day with food. COMPLERA should not be used with other HIV-1 medicines.

Just the **one**  for me

**COMPLERA** is a complete HIV-1 treatment that combines the medicines in TRUVADA + EDURANT in only **1 pill a day**.\*

**Ask your healthcare provider if COMPLERA may be the one for you.**

\*COMPLERA is a combination of the medicines in TRUVADA (emtricitabine and tenofovir disoproxil fumarate) and EDURANT (rilpivirine).

Pill shown is not actual size.



## COMPLERA does not cure HIV-1 infection or AIDS.

To control HIV-1 infection and decrease HIV-related illnesses you must keep taking COMPLERA. Ask your healthcare provider if you have questions about how to reduce the risk of passing HIV-1 to others. Always practice safer sex and use condoms to lower the chance of sexual contact with body fluids. Never reuse or share needles or other items that have body fluids on them.

It is not known if COMPLERA is safe and effective in children under 18 years old.

## IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

### What is the most important information I should know about COMPLERA?

COMPLERA can cause serious side effects:

- **Build-up of an acid in your blood (lactic acidosis)**, which is a serious medical emergency. Symptoms of lactic acidosis include feeling very weak or tired, unusual (not normal) muscle pain, trouble breathing, stomach pain with nausea or vomiting, feeling cold especially in your arms and legs, feeling dizzy or lightheaded, and/or a fast or irregular heartbeat.
- **Serious liver problems.** The liver may become large (hepatomegaly) and fatty (steatosis). Symptoms of liver problems include your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice), dark “tea-colored” urine, light-colored bowel movements (stools), loss of appetite for several days or longer, nausea, and/or stomach pain.
- **You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or serious liver problems** if you are female, very overweight (obese), or have been taking COMPLERA for a long time. In some cases, these serious conditions have led to death. Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any symptoms of these conditions.
- **Worsening of hepatitis B (HBV) infection.** If you also have HBV and stop taking COMPLERA, your hepatitis may suddenly get worse. Do not stop taking COMPLERA without first talking to your healthcare provider, as they will need to monitor your health. COMPLERA is not approved for the treatment of HBV.

### Who should not take COMPLERA?

Do not take COMPLERA if you:

- **Take a medicine that contains:** adefovir (Hepsera), lamivudine (Epivir-HBV), carbamazepine (Carbatrol, Equetro, Tegretol, Tegretol-XR, Teril, Eptol), oxcarbazepine (Trileptal), phenobarbital (Luminal), phenytoin (Dilantin, Dilantin-125, Phenytek), rifampin (Rifater, Rifamate, Rimactane, Rifadin), rifapentine (Priftin), dextansoprazole (Dexilant), esomeprazole (Nexium, Vimovo), lansoprazole (Prevacid), omeprazole (Prilosec, Zegerid), pantoprazole sodium (Protonix), rabeprazole (Aciphex), more than 1 dose of the steroid medicine dexamethasone or dexamethasone sodium phosphate, or the herbal supplement St. John's wort.
- **Take any other medicines to treat HIV-1 infection**, unless recommended by your healthcare provider.

### What are the other possible side effects of COMPLERA?

Serious side effects of COMPLERA may also include:

- **Severe skin rash and allergic reactions.** Call your doctor right away if you get a rash. Some rashes and allergic reactions may need to be treated in a hospital. Stop taking COMPLERA and get medical help right away if you get a rash with any of the following symptoms: severe allergic reactions causing a swollen face, lips, mouth, tongue or throat which may lead to difficulty swallowing or breathing; mouth sores or blisters on your body; inflamed eye (conjunctivitis); fever, dark urine or pain on the right side of the stomach-area (abdominal pain).
- **New or worse kidney problems, including kidney failure.** Your healthcare provider should do blood tests to check your kidneys before starting treatment with COMPLERA. If you have had kidney problems, or take other medicines that may cause kidney problems, your healthcare provider may also check your kidneys during treatment with COMPLERA.

- **Depression or mood changes.** Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have any of the following symptoms: feeling sad or hopeless, feeling anxious or restless, have thoughts of hurting yourself (suicide) or have tried to hurt yourself.
- **Changes in liver enzymes:** People who have had hepatitis B or C, or who have had changes in their liver function tests in the past may have an increased risk for liver problems while taking COMPLERA. Some people without prior liver disease may also be at risk. Your healthcare provider may do tests to check your liver enzymes before and during treatment with COMPLERA.
- **Bone problems**, including bone pain or bones getting soft or thin, which may lead to fractures. Your healthcare provider may do tests to check your bones.
- **Changes in body fat** can happen in people taking HIV-1 medicines.
- **Changes in your immune system.** Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any new symptoms after you start taking COMPLERA.

The most common side effects of COMPLERA include trouble sleeping (insomnia), abnormal dreams, headache, dizziness, diarrhea, nausea, rash, tiredness, and depression. Other common side effects include vomiting, stomach pain or discomfort, skin discoloration (small spots or freckles), and pain. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effects that bother you or do not go away.

### What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking COMPLERA?

- **All your health problems.** Be sure to tell your healthcare provider if you have or had any kidney, mental health, bone, or liver problems, including hepatitis virus infection.
- **All the medicines you take**, including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. COMPLERA may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how COMPLERA works. Keep a list of all your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist. Do not start any new medicines while taking COMPLERA without first talking with your healthcare provider.
- **If you take rifabutin (Mycobutin).** Talk to your healthcare provider about the right amount of rilpivirine (Edurant) you should take.
- **If you take antacids.** Take antacids at least 2 hours before or at least 4 hours after you take COMPLERA.
- **If you take stomach acid blockers.** Take acid blockers at least 12 hours before or at least 4 hours after you take COMPLERA. Ask your healthcare provider if your acid blocker is okay to take, as some acid blockers should never be taken with COMPLERA.
- **If you are pregnant** or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if COMPLERA can harm your unborn baby. Tell your healthcare provider if you become pregnant while taking COMPLERA.
- **If you are breastfeeding** (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed. HIV-1 can be passed to the baby in breast milk. Also, some medicines in COMPLERA can pass into breast milk, and it is not known if this can harm the baby.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit [www.fda.gov/medwatch](http://www.fda.gov/medwatch), or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Please see Brief Summary of full Prescribing Information with important warnings on the following pages.



**COMPLERA®**  
emtricitabine 200mg/rilpivirine 25mg/  
tenofovir disoproxil fumarate 300mg tablets



## Brief Summary of full Prescribing Information

### COMPLERA® (kom-PLUH-rah)

(emtricitabine 200 mg, rilpivirine 25 mg, tenofovir disoproxil fumarate 300 mg) tablets

Brief summary of full Prescribing Information. For more information, please see the full Prescribing Information, including Patient Information.

### What is COMPLERA?

- **COMPLERA is a prescription medicine** used as a complete HIV-1 treatment in one pill a day. COMPLERA is for adults who have never taken HIV-1 medicines before and who have no more than 100,000 copies/mL of virus in their blood (this is called ‘viral load’). Complera can also replace current HIV-1 medicines for some adults who have an undetectable viral load (less than 50 copies/mL) and whose healthcare provider determines that they meet certain other requirements.
- **COMPLERA is a complete HIV-1 medicine** and should not be used with any other HIV-1 medicines.
- **COMPLERA should always be taken with food.** A protein drink does not replace food.
- **COMPLERA does not cure HIV-1 or AIDS.** You must stay on continuous HIV-1 therapy to control HIV-1 infection and decrease HIV-related illnesses.
- **Ask your healthcare provider about how to prevent passing HIV-1 to others.** Do not share or reuse needles, injection equipment, or personal items that can have blood or body fluids on them. Do not have sex without protection. Always practice safer sex by using a latex or polyurethane condom to lower the chance of sexual contact with semen, vaginal secretions, or blood.

### What is the most important information I should know about COMPLERA?

#### COMPLERA can cause serious side effects, including:

- **Build-up of an acid in your blood (lactic acidosis).** Lactic acidosis can happen in some people who take COMPLERA or similar (nucleoside analogs) medicines. Lactic acidosis is a serious medical emergency that can lead to death. Lactic acidosis can be hard to identify early, because the symptoms could seem like symptoms of other health problems. **Call your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms which could be signs of lactic acidosis:**
  - feel very weak or tired
  - have unusual (not normal) muscle pain
  - have trouble breathing
  - having stomach pain with nausea or vomiting
  - feel cold, especially in your arms and legs
  - feel dizzy or lightheaded
  - have a fast or irregular heartbeat
- **Severe liver problems.** Severe liver problems can happen in people who take COMPLERA. In some cases, these liver problems can lead to death. Your liver may become large (hepatomegaly) and you may develop fat in your liver (steatosis). **Call your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms of liver problems:**
  - your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice)
  - dark “tea-colored” urine
  - light-colored bowel movements (stools)
  - loss of appetite for several days or longer
  - nausea
  - stomach pain
- **You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or severe liver problems if you are female, very overweight (obese), or have been taking COMPLERA for a long time.**

- **Worsening of Hepatitis B infection.** If you have hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection and take COMPLERA, your HBV may get worse (flare-up) if you stop taking COMPLERA. A “flare-up” is when your HBV infection suddenly returns in a worse way than before. COMPLERA is not approved for the treatment of HBV, so you must discuss your HBV with your healthcare provider.

- Do not run out of COMPLERA. Refill your prescription or talk to your healthcare provider before your COMPLERA is all gone.
- Do not stop taking COMPLERA without first talking to your healthcare provider.
- If you stop taking COMPLERA, your healthcare provider will need to check your health often and do blood tests regularly to check your HBV infection. Tell your healthcare provider about any new or unusual symptoms you may have after you stop taking COMPLERA.

### Who should not take COMPLERA?

#### Do not take COMPLERA if you also take any of the following medicines:

- **Medicines used for seizures:** carbamazepine (Carbatrol, Equetro, Tegretol, Tegretol-XR, Teril, Eptol); oxcarbazepine (Trileptal); phenobarbital (Luminal); phenytoin (Dilantin, Dilantin-125, Phenytek)
- **Medicines used for tuberculosis:** rifampin (Rifater, Rifamate, Rimactane, Rifadin); rifapentine (Priftin)
- **Certain medicines used to block stomach acid called proton pump inhibitors (PPIs):** dexlansoprazole (Dexilant); esomeprazole (Nexium, Vimovo); lansoprazole (Prevacid); omeprazole (Prilosec, Zegerid); pantoprazole sodium (Protonix); rabeprazole (Aciphex)
- **Certain steroid medicines:** More than 1 dose of dexamethasone or dexamethasone sodium phosphate
- **Certain herbal supplements:** St. John's wort
- **Certain hepatitis medicines:** adefovir (Hepsera), lamivudine (Epivir-HBV)

#### Do not take COMPLERA if you also take any other HIV-1 medicines, including:

- Other medicines that contain emtricitabine or tenofovir (ATRIPLA, EMTRIVA, STRIBILD, TRUVADA, VIREAD)
- Other medicines that contain lamivudine (Combivir, Epivir, Epzicom, Triumeq, Trizivir)
- rilpivirine (Edurant), unless you are also taking rifabutin (Mycobutin)

**COMPLERA is not for use in people who are less than 18 years old.**

### What are the possible side effects of COMPLERA?

#### COMPLERA may cause the following serious side effects:

- **See “What is the most important information I should know about COMPLERA?”**
- **Severe skin rash and allergic reactions.** Skin rash is a common side effect of COMPLERA but it can also be serious. Call your doctor right away if you get a rash. In some cases, rash and allergic reaction may need to be treated in a hospital. Stop taking COMPLERA and call your doctor or get medical help right away if you get a rash with any of the following symptoms:
  - severe allergic reactions causing a swollen face, lips, mouth, tongue or throat, which may cause difficulty swallowing or breathing
  - mouth sores or blisters on your body
  - inflamed eye (conjunctivitis)
  - fever, dark urine or pain on the right side of the stomach-area (abdominal pain)
- **New or worse kidney problems, including kidney failure.** Your healthcare provider should do blood and urine tests to check your kidneys before you start and while you are taking COMPLERA. If you have had kidney problems in the past or need to take another medicine that can cause kidney problems, your healthcare provider may need to do blood tests to check your kidneys during your treatment with COMPLERA.



- **Depression or mood changes.** Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have any of the following symptoms:
  - feeling sad or hopeless
  - feeling anxious or restless
  - have thoughts of hurting yourself (suicide) or have tried to hurt yourself
- **Change in liver enzymes.** People with a history of hepatitis B or C virus infection or who have certain liver enzyme changes may have an increased risk of developing new or worsening liver problems during treatment with COMPLERA. Liver problems can also happen during treatment with COMPLERA in people without a history of liver disease. Your healthcare provider may need to do tests to check your liver enzymes before and during treatment with COMPLERA.
- **Bone problems** can happen in some people who take COMPLERA. Bone problems include bone pain, softening or thinning (which may lead to fractures). Your healthcare provider may need to do tests to check your bones.
- **Changes in body fat** can happen in people taking HIV-1 medicine. These changes may include increased amount of fat in the upper back and neck (“buffalo hump”), breast, and around the main part of your body (trunk). Loss of fat from the legs, arms and face may also happen. The cause and long term health effect of these conditions are not known.
- **Changes in your immune system (Immune Reconstitution Syndrome)** can happen when you start taking HIV-1 medicines. Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections that have been hidden in your body for a long time. Tell your healthcare provider if you start having any new symptoms after starting your HIV-1 medicine.

**The most common side effects of COMPLERA include:**

- Trouble sleeping (insomnia), abnormal dreams, headache, dizziness, diarrhea, nausea, rash, tiredness, depression

**Additional common side effects include:**

- Vomiting, stomach pain or discomfort, skin discoloration (small spots or freckles), pain

**Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away.**

- These are not all the possible side effects of COMPLERA. For more information, ask your healthcare provider.
- Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

**What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking COMPLERA?**

**Tell your healthcare provider about all your medical conditions, including:**

- If you have or had any kidney, mental health, bone, or liver problems, including hepatitis B or C infection.
- If you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if COMPLERA can harm your unborn child.
  - There is a pregnancy registry for women who take antiviral medicines during pregnancy. The purpose of this registry is to collect information about the health of you and your baby. Talk to your healthcare provider about how you can take part in this registry.
- If you are breastfeeding (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed if you take COMPLERA.
  - You should not breastfeed if you have HIV-1 because of the risk of passing HIV-1 to your baby.
  - Two of the medicines in COMPLERA can pass to your baby in your breast milk. It is not known if this could harm your baby.
  - Talk to your healthcare provider about the best way to feed your baby.

**Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements:**

- COMPLERA may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how COMPLERA works.
- If you take certain medicines with COMPLERA, the amount of COMPLERA in your body may be too low and it may not work to help control your HIV-1 infection. The HIV-1 virus in your body may become resistant to COMPLERA or other HIV-1 medicines that are like it.
- Be sure to tell your healthcare provider if you take any of the following medicines:
  - Rifabutin (Mycobutin), a medicine to treat some bacterial infections. Talk to your healthcare provider about the right amount of rilpivirine (Edurant) you should take.
  - Antacid medicines that contain aluminum, magnesium hydroxide, or calcium carbonate. Take antacids **at least 2 hours before or at least 4 hours after** you take COMPLERA.
  - Certain medicines to block the acid in your stomach, including cimetidine (Tagamet), famotidine (Pepcid), nizatidine (Axid), or ranitidine hydrochloride (Zantac). Take the acid blocker **at least 12 hours before or at least 4 hours after** you take COMPLERA. Some acid blocking medicines should never be taken with COMPLERA (see “Who should not take COMPLERA?” for a list of these medicines).
  - Medicines that can affect how your kidneys work, including acyclovir (Zovirax), cidofovir (Vistide), ganciclovir (Cytovene IV, Vitrasert), valacyclovir (Valtrex), and valganciclovir (Valcyte).
  - clarithromycin (Biaxin)
  - erythromycin (E-Mycin, Eryc, Ery-Tab, PCE, Pediazole, Ilosone)
  - fluconazole (Diflucan)
  - itraconazole (Sporanox)
  - ketoconazole (Nizoral)
  - methadone (Dolophine)
  - posaconazole (Noxafil)
  - telithromycin (Ketek)
  - voriconazole (Vfend)

**Know the medicines you take.** Keep a list of all your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist when you get a new medicine. Do not start any new medicines while you are taking COMPLERA without first talking with your healthcare provider.

**Keep COMPLERA and all medicines out of reach of children.**

This Brief Summary summarizes the most important information about COMPLERA. If you would like more information, talk with your healthcare provider. You can also ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for information about COMPLERA that is written for health professionals, or call 1-800-445-3235 or go to [www.COMPLERA.com](http://www.COMPLERA.com).

Revised: May 2015



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## DAILY DOSE

## POLICY OF TRUTH

After a frustrating, decades-long stagnation in rates of HIV transmission, there's a breakthrough in San Francisco. With information and strategy we can overpower HIV.

BY BRENDEN SHUCART

I am privileged to sit on the board of Project Inform, a nonprofit that focuses on HIV and hepatitis C education and policy. Our staff of passionate and dedicated professionals create pamphlets and videos to inform doctors and patients of the latest advances in HIV treatment and prevention, educate health care professionals about new developments in the law, and advise policymakers at the federal, state, and municipal levels as to the best ways to bring this epidemic to an end. As an organization, PI does not provide direct services in the form of treatment or prevention. PI provides information.

As a board member, I pitch in at the occasional event or street fair. I attend the odd cocktail party where I do my best to represent the organization well. I sit in on a seemingly endless procession of meetings, committees, conference calls, and retreats, and I do a lot of haranguing my family and friends for money. (No, seriously, please donate.) I also spend a lot of time fretting about whether I'm the right man for the job, or if I'm doing a good job, or if I'm having any real or lasting impact on the HIV epidemic at all.

Project Inform's board members serve five-year terms, and this is my final year. I'm proud of the work that we've done, and I'm honored to have been a part of an organization so integral to the fight, but sometimes it all seems so intangible. When your mission is to provide information, how do you measure success?

This year, the San Francisco AIDS Walk, of which PI is the lead sponsor, raised more than \$2.27 million to help support 42 programs and agencies vital to the health and survival of people living with HIV in the San Francisco Bay Area. It's a vital event, and people could literally die if this money weren't raised. But even with such impressive fundraising, it can feel like we're spinning our wheels.

The AIDS epidemic is older than I, yet despite the millions of dollars raised and the countless hours of service dedicated



by passionate volunteers and hardworking professionals over the past 34 years, infection rates in the United States have been essentially steady since the '90s. And in many parts of the South they are actually on the rise. Yet so many organizations seem content merely to maintain the status quo, doubling down on the failed, fear-based strategies of the past.

I often wonder, *How long can this struggle last? Will I be manning these trenches until I die?*

Recently the *San Francisco Examiner* reported that HIV infections and deaths in the city are at an all-time low, to just over 300 in 2014. That's down 30% since 2012. It was news that struck me like a ray of sunlight after a seemingly endless night.

It is difficult to point to any one factor and definitively say "this is the cause," but much of the credit must certainly go to the City of San Francisco's aggressive "Getting to Zero" strategy, with its focus on

early treatment, linkage to care, and—most controversially—PrEP. "Getting to Zero" is a policy that Project Inform has been deeply involved with from inception to implementation, and its success demonstrates that we have the power to end HIV/AIDS in a couple of generations. The tools to end the epidemic are within our grasp.

Policy work isn't as flashy as prevention and it doesn't provide the immediate satisfaction of direct services, but without well thought-out public policy and a willingness to use all of the tools at our disposal, we will never bring an end to HIV.

I won't be on the board to see it, but with Project Inform's leadership, I know that day is on the horizon. ♦

*Brenden Schucart is an HIV/AIDS and LGBT rights advocate, actor, and writer. He was formerly the editor of Positive Frontiers, and his writing about HIV-related health issues and stigma has been featured in Out There and Plus magazine.*



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## NUMBER CRUNCH: ART

It not a recent phenomenon that gay people have found themselves at the fore of artistic expression. From Michelangelo and Da Vinci onward, we've been on the cutting edge since long before we even had a name for ourselves.

24

Leonardo Da Vinci's age when he was arrested on charges of sodomy in 1476

1987

Year the Leslie-Lohman Museum, the **first art museum dedicated to LGBT art**, was opened in New York City

3,000–7,000

Number of homoerotic photographs taken by Wilhelm von Gloeden in Sicily between 1878 and 1910



\$105  
MILLION

Highest price paid for an Andy Warhol piece [*Silver Car Crash (Double Disaster)*]

1962

Year the United States Supreme Court ruled **male nudity in photographs** to be not obscene



\$87,000,000

Annual ticket revenue of visitors to the **Sistine Chapel**, painted by gay artist Michelangelo

30%

Percentage of the 20 most expensive paintings done by gay artists

**Andy Warhol  
Jasper Johns  
Francis Bacon**

1,500

Number of existing Polaroids taken by **Robert Mapplethorpe**



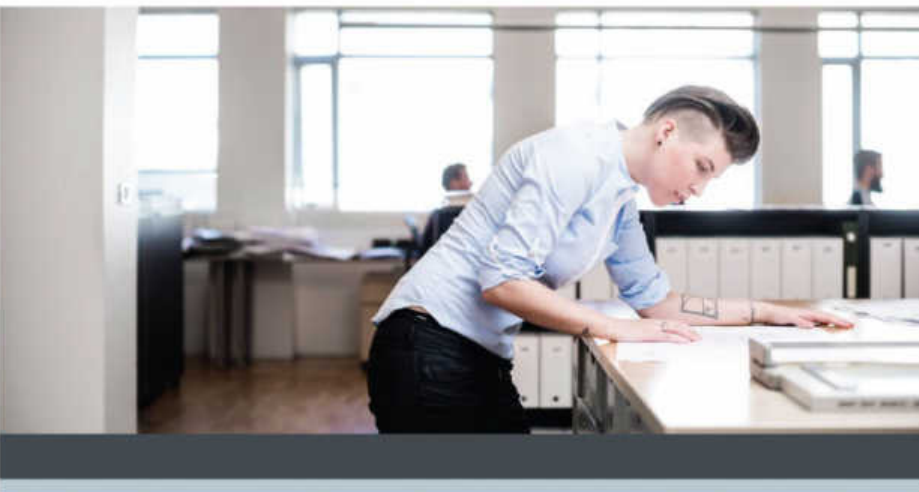
Weight of NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt



300

Number of **penises on display in Charles Leslie's mini bar**; they are among more than 10,000 homoerotic pieces in the apartment of the Leslie-Lohman Museum co-founder





SPECIAL PROMOTION

# THE ADVOCATE

*Equality in the Workplace*

## APPLAUDING COMPANIES COMMITTED TO CORPORATE DIVERSITY

*The Advocate* proudly presents *Equality in the Workplace*, a celebration of the companies that embrace diversity in workplace and create an environment where every employee can to be their authentic selves.

2015 has brought monumental gains toward LGBT equality with the passage of nationwide same-sex marriage – but let's not forget the fight for equality is not yet done. At many companies, LGBT men and women are still not afforded the same workplace protections and benefits. It is now more important than ever before to recognize the companies who take pride in fostering a safe, equitable and inclusive work environment for its employees.

Each of the companies selected for our *Equality in the Workplace* section demonstrate clear and unwavering support for their lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender employees and stakeholders through company-wide policies and procedures. By supporting them, we're supporting full and equal protections for all.



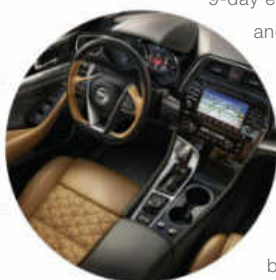
## Nissan Supports Equality on Every Road You Travel

### Proud partner of the 2015 Gay Softball World Series

This summer, Nissan hit a home run with its partnership with the North American Gay Amateur Athletic Alliance (NAGAAA) and its 39th Annual Gay Softball World Series event in Columbus, Ohio.

The event made GSWS history with more than 185 softball teams competing from 43 cities across the United States and Canada. The multi-division tournament was more than just a ball game. The

9-day event also featured opening and closing ceremonies, community events, celebrity performances and more.



*#SameTeam  
for Equality*

"Nissan has the most diverse consumer base of any automotive manufacturer and is eager to champion grassroots LGBT events that give consumers a chance to interact with both our vehicles and our LGBT and ally employees," said Rick Ash, Senior Manager, Nissan Marketing. "It's an honor for Nissan to bring more visibility to all of the LGBT athletes who competed."

Since 2013, Nissan has scored a perfect 100 in the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Corporate Equality Index for its LGBT-inclusive policies and commitment to the community. The company was among the fastest risers in the history of the index.

Nissan's commitment to the LGBT community starts with its own employees. The company strives to ensure internal policies and benefit packages are inclusive of everyone. And Nissan's Gay Straight Alliance at Nissan (GSAN) is the driving force behind the company's LGBT outreach efforts, focusing on its hometown of Nashville as well as on other regional LGBT events.

DiversityInc Magazine also named Nissan to its 2015 Top 25 Noteworthy Companies list for the second year in a row. The company is an active member of the Nashville LGBT Chamber of Commerce and a sponsor of the annual National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association convention. Nissan's Diversity Office—with the help of GSAN—has sponsored several workshops for area business leaders where they can share diversity best practices for creating an inclusive environment for employees and supporting the LGBT community in Middle Tennessee.







Innovation  
that excites

# COME OUT AND PLAY.

Nissan proudly sponsors the 2015 Gay Softball World Series.



Always wear your seat belt, and please don't drink and drive. ©2015 Nissan North America, Inc.



**WELLS  
FARGO**

Fear should not keep LGBT youth from reaching their full potential.

In 2012, GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network) approached Wells Fargo with a bold goal in support of their Safe Space campaign. Through an innovative effort to address anti-LGBT bullying, GLSEN aimed to provide a Safe Space Kit to every middle and high school in the United States. The contents of the kit were simple: stickers, a poster, and an educator guide to being an ally. The possibility for improving the experience of LGBT students, however, was huge.

*85% of LGBT students report verbal harassment and 30% miss school because they feel unsafe\**



Wells Fargo saw potential in the program and committed to help GLSEN reach this goal. In December 2013 – and more than 60,000 kits later – a group of Wells

Fargo team members presented

a kit to the final school, East Mecklenburg High School in Charlotte, North Carolina.

During and following the distribution of the kits, GLSEN conducted research to help quantify the

benefits of the program. The results show that students who had seen a Safe Space sticker or poster in their school were more likely to identify school staff who were supportive of LGBT students and more likely to feel comfortable talking about LGBT issues. The educators themselves reported that the Safe Space Kit increased their skill and knowledge in supporting LGBT youth.\*

Bringing visibility to the challenges facing LGBT youth is an important passion for Wells Fargo. In addition to GLSEN, Wells Fargo supports many other organizations focused on supporting LGBT youth, including The Trevor Project and Point Foundation. We are also a proud presenting sponsor of GLAAD's Spirit Day campaign. We invite you to join us in "going purple" on Spirit Day, October 15, 2015, to show solidarity with LGBT youth who are bullied.

Small efforts can create big changes – and together we hope to help create a world where all children can reach their full potential.

*For more information, please visit [wellsfargo.com/lgbt](http://wellsfargo.com/lgbt)*

\*National School Climate Survey: The experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth in our Nation's Schools. (2014) GLSEN







I'm safe being me.

I'm free to be out, without  
having to drop out.

### Inspiring confidence in LGBT youth

Last year, 8 out of 10 LGBT students reported being harassed or intimidated at school. And many will see no other option but to drop out due to low self-esteem and fearing for their safety. But making small changes, such as helping students identify supportive educators, can have a huge impact.

In 2014, we helped GLSEN reach its goal of putting a Safe Space Kit in every middle school and high school across the country. With the simple guide, poster, and stickers found inside, teachers are creating spaces where students feel empowered, safe to be themselves, and free to reach their maximum potential.

Little by little, we can all do a lot to improve the lives of LGBT students. Small is Huge.<sup>SM</sup>

**Learn more about our continued support of the LGBT community at [wellsfargo.com/lgbt](http://wellsfargo.com/lgbt).  
And remember to join us in wearing purple on Spirit Day, October 15th.**

Together we'll go far





## Creating a Culture of Inclusion

### WORKPLACE INCLUSION AT THE HEART OF COMPANY VALUES

Before Larry Ewaska began working for Toyota five years ago, he had been in the habit of keeping his personal life personal. At past jobs, he would be vague about his weekend plans, telling coworkers about spending time with 'friends', never mentioning his long-term partner.

At Toyota, Larry quickly discovered the company's culture is one built around inclusion.

After years of hiding his partner from colleagues, Larry now worked somewhere that not only encouraged him to speak freely about his life, but inspired and supported his volunteer efforts in the LGBTQ

community and provided workplace policies that equalized his employee and tax benefits.

Case in point, in 2002, Toyota was one of the first auto companies to provide truly comprehensive domestic partner benefits and has continually expanded

same-sex partner tax benefits, adoption support and transgender health benefits. For eight straight years, the company has scored 100% on the Human Rights Campaign's Corporate Equality Index and, through financial and volunteer support, has invested in dozens of national and local LGBTQ organizations such as The Trevor Project, L.A. LGBT Center, GLAAD, The Ally Coalition and Point Foundation. At Toyota, LGBTQ employees and their allies participate in an employee resource group, Spectrum, which gives the community a voice and promotes diversity of thought across the company through events and speakers.

Toyota goes above and beyond to ensure diversity and inclusion are embraced by its employees, dealers, suppliers and the communities in which its employees live and work. This June, Toyota celebrated Pride Month by introducing its Allies program, where employees signed a pledge to support their LGBTQ colleagues. In just two days, they amassed hundreds of signatures, including their top executives – a testament to a company whose foundational pillars are respect for people and continuous improvement.

**“Thanks to Toyota, I now understand what it feels like to go to my job everyday and not only feel proud of the work I do, but proud of who I am. ”**

**Larry Ewaska**

SENIOR CONTRACT SPECIALIST  
Toyota Financial Services



Let's  
Go  
Places





The Future of the Workplace is | kind  
supportive  
diverse  
inclusive  
here



We strive to make sure that everyone in the Toyota family can be proud of who they are and what they do. Our mission of respect for people has navigated us towards workplace equality and an environment where innovation can thrive.



# THE ADVOCATE

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👆 Interactive features





BARBER  
SHOP



# The Vanguard

The LGBTs at the cutting edge of business, science  
and technology, and activism



# LITTLE SHOP OF DREAMS

Ayesha Harris was tired of being the only woman—and the only lesbian—in the black barbershop community. So she carved out her own space in Los Angeles, and Ninth Chapter Barbershop was born.

BY SUNNIVIE BRYDUM

PHOTOGRAPHY BY LEANN MUELLER



## Ayesha Harris Barber, Entrepreneur, 35

LOS ANGELES



The African-American barbershop community is a tough place to be a woman. It's an even tougher place to be a lesbian—just ask Ayesha Harris. After years of working at traditional and “high-value” barbershops, Harris needed more than just a change of scenery.

“I’m always the only woman,” Harris says of her past experiences. “Any other female barber I talk to, they’re always the only woman.”

So the Long Beach, Calif., native took matters into her own hands. In 2013, she opened Ninth Chapter Barbershop in the

Fairfax district of Los Angeles, just a few blocks north of the strip of restaurants and shops known as “Little Ethiopia.”

“We’re a collective of all female barbers,” Harris says proudly. “We’re all lesbians.”

That distinction makes Ninth Chapter unique not only in Los Angeles but quite possibly in the entire country. Despite its being the first shop of its kind, Harris says the reception has been “amazing.”

“Everybody loves the space—it’s cozy,” she says. “I get a really good reception on vibe, time management, and overall shop talk. Because some of these guys, these girls, they can’t go into the [traditional barber] shop and talk about some guy they met on Grindr last night.”

Judging by the success she’s had over the past two years, Harris has tapped into a woefully unfulfilled need. The support has been so readily available that Harris says she hasn’t had to seek outside financial support since launching Ninth Chapter. Lest anyone underestimate the value of the “gay dollar,” as she calls it, Harris reckons that approximately “90%” of her clientele are queer-identified.

“I cater to the gay community, the trans community, openly,





Above: Ayesha Harris with a client; Right, from left: Parris Wagner, Natasha Johnson, and Miss Eran, the barbers of Ninth Chapter Barbershop, with Harris.



and with open arms," she says. "Everyone is welcome in my barbershop."

But there is one kind of person Harris says she won't tolerate at Ninth Chapter: "No homophobes allowed. That's actually a rule here."

"I purposely talk loud about whatever I want to, if I feel someone's in here that isn't a part of the community," she adds. "Because I want you to know, if you want to be included in this shop, then there is no room for any ill will because you don't like what we're saying."

Like any barber or stylist, Harris spends a good deal of her time playing "therapist" to clients seated in her chair. But there's something about the space itself, and the environment she's cultivated, that makes it feel uniquely safe for LGBT people. In fact, when she left her former workplace just down the street to start her own shop, some of her clients came with her—with several coming out to her for the first time only when seated in a chair at Ninth Chapter.

"I really wanted to build a collective, and a base of people that knew [who we were] so that we can have our queer base, and then when we open it up to the public, we have established

that this is our space," Harris explains.

That plan worked. For the first two years of business, Harris eschewed traditional advertising, building a client base solely on word of mouth. She contends her chair was full that entire time—and continues to be, now that she has placed a sandwich board outside the shop welcoming walk-ins for the first time.

Just in time for Pride month, Harris installed a modest, black-and-white spinning barbershop pole outside the second-story shop's window. There is no signage visible from the street, and the shop shares a wall (and occasional customer base) with the vegan tattoo shop next door, whose owner, James Spooner, co-founded the AfroPunk music festival.

In keeping with her vision for a tight-knit, community-focused establishment, Harris says she "just recently" opened up the collective to other barbers, preferring to cultivate the shop "slowly, particularly with who I want." At press time, Harris works alongside three other barbers, though the shop was just approved for an expansion into the unit next door, which will make room for three additional barbers. That expansion is slated for completion in October.

After that, Harris wants to launch franchise locations throughout the greater Los Angeles area. She envisions the Fairfax location being the "flagship" shop, while hoping to expand to Long Beach, downtown Los Angeles, the San Fernando Valley, and one day, even to Oakland in the Bay Area.

But no matter how many franchises pop up in the future, Ninth Chapter's mission will remain the same. Staffing them primarily with LGBT barbers, Harris wants each location to earn its reputation as "your local gay barber shop."

In the Ninth Chapter, she stresses: "You can just come in, and it doesn't matter what you're doing: white, black, trans, straight, gay, it doesn't matter. You want a haircut? Come get a haircut." ♦

## Caroline Dessert Activist, 32

NEW YORK CITY



The United States is home to 11.3 million undocumented immigrants. They face enormous, sometimes harrowing, challenges in their struggle to survive within our less than hospitable borders: discrimination, racial profiling, alienation, forcible separation from loved ones, placement in detention centers, the constant threat of deportation, and many other hardships. LGBT people, who comprise an estimated 300,000 of that population, endure added levels of adversity, including homophobia-motivated harassment and sexual assault, as well as mental health issues stemming from persecution.

Through the heroic efforts of Immigration Equality, an advocacy organization based in New York, many of these queer refugees are finding their way to safety and stability. The non-profit, founded in 1994, specializes in securing freedom for LGBT asylum seekers and detainees by helping them maneuver our complex legal system.

The brainpower behind Immigration Equality is executive director Caroline Dessert, a self-identified queer Latina who hails from El Centro, Calif., a rural community that borders Mexico and Arizona. In her early youth, she saw firsthand the unfair conditions undocumented immigrants and LGBT people



## Dr. Kate Stone Inventor, 46

CAMBRIDGE, ENGLAND



Dr. Kate Stone has a Ph.D. in electronics from the University of Cambridge, is one of the founders of award-winning technology company Novalia, and has given TED talks viewed more than 600,000 times online. She's transgender, regularly features on lists of renowned LGBT individuals (including this year's World Pride Power list, compiled by Square Peg Media), and has changed the way the British press reports transgender topics. She has also literally made DJ decks out of paper.

"I develop technology that allows us to interact with everyday things in a very different way," says the self-styled creative scientist. And she's not wrong. Through experimenting with paper, conductive inks, and miniature circuit boards, Stone has a vast portfolio of creations that includes paper drum kits, interactive posters, and newspapers with embedded audio.

"I say it's like taking what is a digital soul—touch, connectivity, and data—and putting it into the heart of everyday beautiful things," says Stone. But despite the resounding success of her work, there were many who thought it would be worthless and that the government shouldn't fund it.

"Honestly, when I set out, I said I'm going to do things that my science friends look down on, laugh at, and say have no



lived under in her small town.

"People had strict notions of what a boy or a girl should look like or how they should act," Dessert says. "I saw people get bullied and beaten up when they didn't conform to those gender norms. And I saw people without papers get thrown into the back of a van and just disappear in 120-degree heat." Those formative experiences inspired her social justice activism and career path.

Before earning a J.D. from UCLA School of Law, she rallied for women's reproductive rights as a staffer at Planned Parenthood. While working for the San Diego LGBT Community Center, she campaigned against Prop. 8 as a regional field director. She went on to work as California's deputy attorney general in the Public Rights division, until late last year, when she took the reins at Immigration Equality. She's already increased its caseload by 45%.

The organization wins an astonishing 98% of its cases. Currently, it has about 550 clients in 25 states and more than 90 law firms in its pro bono network.

While Dessert remains cautiously optimistic about President Obama's new immigration policies, she notes that the proposed changes do nothing to ensure that LGBT people are detained safely. "Transgender women are housed in male facilities, where they are 13 times more likely to be sexually assaulted. And gay men are 10 times more likely to be sexually assaulted than the general population."

"I met with Jeh Johnson, the secretary of the Department of Homeland Security," she says, "and really pushed for him to come to a better solution. It's a human rights atrocity for people who flee persecution to be exposed to that same persecution here on U.S. soil."

—STEPH FAIRYINGTON

value," says Stone. "And people quite literally did that. I just have to carry on in the face of all that negativity because I believe with the connection I have inside me that what I'm doing is the right thing. I knew without a shadow of a doubt if I used my creative ninja skills, used what's around me, and focused on my goal, I could change what people thought I could not change."

It's indicative of the way she operates. On New Year's Eve 2013, she was gored by a stag on the way home from a pub in the Scottish Highlands, a freak accident that shattered her throat. The story was picked up by British tabloids, many of which ran transphobic headlines and hounded Stone's family for information about her transition.

Rather than ride it out, Stone sought change and took up the issue with the Press Complaints Commission (PCC) with the intention of changing the way the media report transgender issues. Five months later, the PCC's ruling saw six national newspapers agree that "sex swap" headlines were unacceptable, while Stone now sits on the Editors' Code of Practice Committee, advising figures such as Paul Dacre, editor of the *Daily Mail*.

Despite the way she was treated, her commitment to change was never driven by anger. "A lot of people describe themselves as an activist, and I think often it can come from a place of anger which is well justified," says Stone. "But using an emotion such as anger is just not effective for me. I feel I have a lot to be happy for, and if I can tap into those emotions of happiness, compassion, and understanding, then I can be more effective at bringing about change."

—CHRIS GODFREY



## Kasha Jacqueline Nabagesera

### Activist, Editor, 35

KAMPALA, UGANDA



She just wanted to send love letters like everyone else. Before she became the "founding mother" of the LGBT movement in Uganda, Kasha Jacqueline Nabagesera was a schoolchild, known to her friends as Bombastic Kasha, or Kashanova. She excelled in track and loved to wear jeans, baseball caps, wide shirts, and sneakers. She lived openly as a lesbian. Her mother thought she was stubborn but supported her, even lied to school administrators so Nabagesera could graduate. She would tell Nabagesera: "Protect yourself, be safe, be safe." But Nabagesera just wanted to send love letters to her crushes, just as everyone else did.

She was someone who wasn't sure why everyone, from her schoolmates to the teachers, was bullying her, why she was expelled from five schools, threatened with corrective rape, beaten by teachers, and forced to wear "gender-appropriate" clothing. Nabagesera was naive, she said, until one day, after being suspended from her university, she decided to find out why her sexuality was such a big deal for other people.

At the age of 21, in 2001, she became a leading voice of the LGBT movement in Uganda. When she joined, the LGBT movement in Uganda consisted mostly of Sunday picnics to build solidarity. Then, during the 2000s, American evangelists began exporting their brand of vitriolic homophobia to Uganda. The former accountant began to study law and human rights, began helping to create a social movement for the benefit of LGBT Ugandans.

The costs were high. In 2007, she was harassed, threat-

"I am no longer criminal today. We have made history for generations to come. Speak OUT now."

ened, and attacked after media appearances in which she urged respect for and tolerance of homosexuals. She could no longer take the bus. She began moving from house to house, never staying too long in one place. In the ensuing years, she was almost arrested during police raids and outed on the cover of popular tabloids. Her friend and fellow LGBT activist, David Kato, was killed with a hammer.

In 2014, the Anti-Homosexuality Act was signed by Uganda's president. The act prohibited sexual relations between members of the same sex, as well as the support or promotion of such relations. When the act was invalidated, Nabagesera tweeted: "I am no longer criminal today. We have made history for generations to come. Speak OUT now."

Today, Nabagesera is one of the activists remaining from the early days of the LGBT movement in Uganda. Still, she is encouraged by the number of young Ugandans joining the cause. "The future looks very bright, no doubt about that," she says.

She and a dozen others in the community worked to create *Bombastic*, a 72-page magazine sharing the stories of LGBT Ugandans. She also helped open Uganda's first gay bar and organized its first Pride parade. She has won many awards and prizes, but she seems most proud of how the community has helped build safe spaces for LGBT Ugandans kicked out of their homes, jobs, and schools. Many of these Ugandans, unlike Nabagesera, did not have supportive mothers and allies.

"I had the choice to stay in my comfort zone and live my life without caring what others were going through," she says, "but my genes do not have such blood to *not* care, so I choose to care." —J.P. LAWRENCE



## Angelica Ross Entrepreneur, 34

CHICAGO



Angelica Ross, the entrepreneur, business leader, military veteran, and transgender role model, was not behind a desk as recently as five years ago. She was on stage, entertaining crowds as a showgirl at Chicago's Kit Kat Lounge and Supper Club.

"I was lip-synching, but I felt I was not truly using my own voice, as a trans person. I was just playing a character."

The Racine, Wis., native had been on her own since she was 19. She lived first as a gay man, then came to terms with being trans, all the while knowing she could not go back home.

Six years later, when her mother eventually came around, Ross felt compelled to reveal something she had done in those desperate and lonely intervening years.

"I know you want to be in my life," she recalls telling her mother. "But I cannot move forward without telling you what the price was for me because you didn't support me. What I had to go through." Like so many, Ross had used the one thing she had to survive: her body.

"This is not just me, this is what happens to so many trans people when they get kicked out of the house.

People don't want to hire us. We have nowhere to live. What else did you expect to happen?"

She put the money she earned from sex work into not just survival but growth: getting a Florida real estate license, taking college courses, and last year she launched her own company. She is the CEO of TransTech Social Enterprises, a training academy and apprenticeship program.

Since May, the Human Rights Campaign has donated office space in its Washington, D.C., headquarters to her start-up and connected Ross with its assets and resources, which has helped her land half a dozen corporate clients.

TransTech charges companies from \$1,200 to as much as \$60,000 to learn how to attract, retain, and embrace trans employees. To members of the community, her company offers specialized technology training, some costing no more than \$99 a month, as well as free services.

And TransTech is not exclusively for and by transgender people. "One of our members is a cis [non-transgender] Latina lesbian," said Ross. "She's helped lead our team."

When not at work, Ross is single, dating, and making connections where she can, including a certain trans woman named Caitlyn Jenner. She recently filmed an episode of *I Am Cait*, helping the former Olympian connect with the community.

"We have to learn to be allies to each other. We are in a deficit of financial and social capital, and TransTech aims to help trans people reverse that." —DAWN ENNIS





**“AMERICA’S MOST  
CHARISMATIC  
LIBERAL”**

**-Steve Coll**

AUTHOR OF *GHOST WARS*

**“THE MOST  
REVERED  
FIGURE IN  
PROGRESSIVE  
MEDIA TODAY”**

**-LA Times**

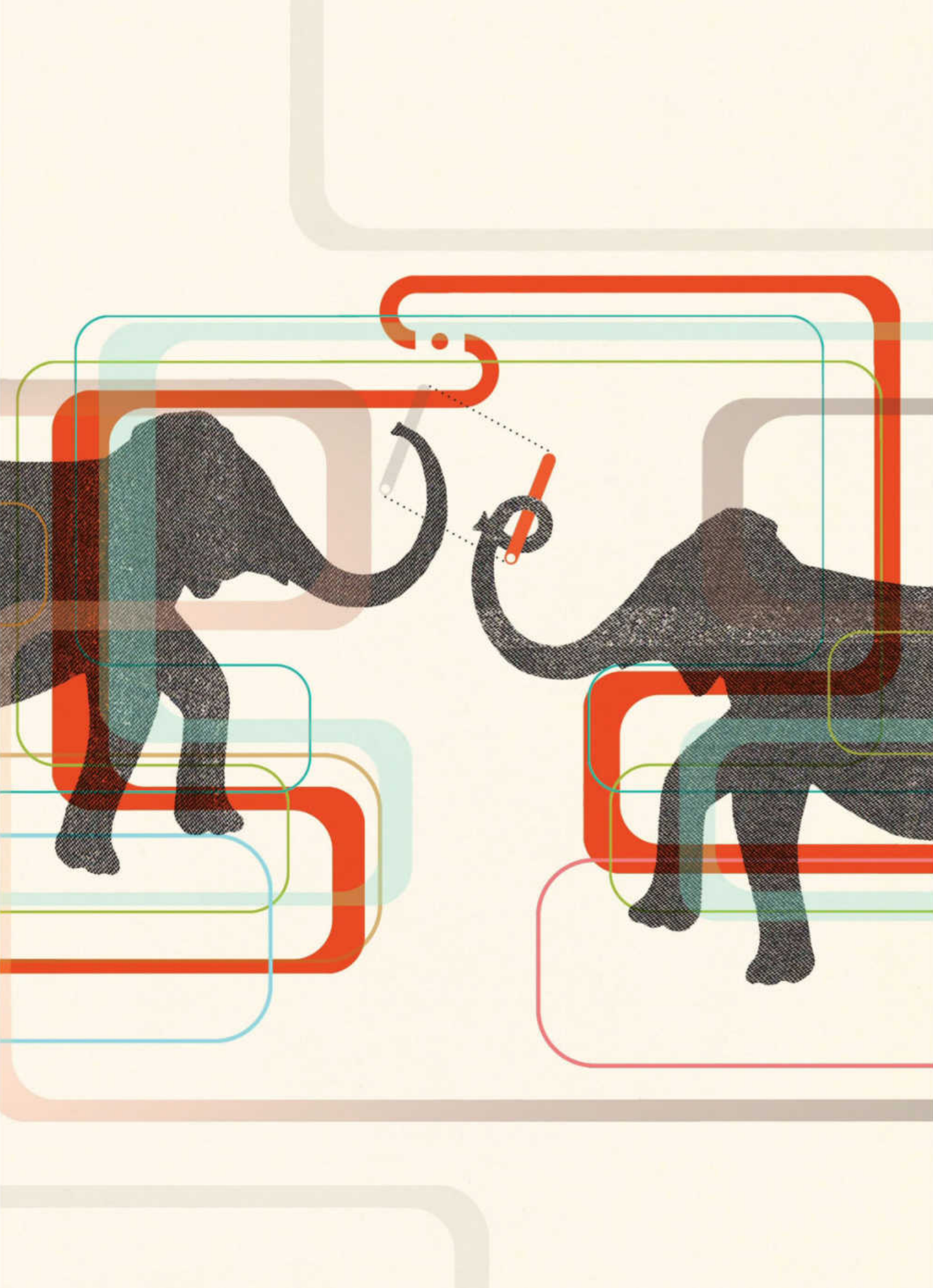
**“SHE’S A  
COMPLETE  
INSPIRATION  
ON SO MANY  
LEVELS”**

**-Glamour**

**THE RACHEL  
MADDOW  
SHOW**

**WEEKNIGHTS 9<sup>PM</sup>  
ET**

 **MSNBC**





# The Conservative Case for Funding

An unlikely constituency is funding the fight for LGBT rights, using the marriage equality road map.

BY KERRY ELEVELD

ILLUSTRATIONS BY MARK ALLEN MILLER

After 11 states passed constitutional amendments banning same-sex marriage in 2004 and President George W. Bush was reelected on an antigay platform, the nascent marriage equality movement was on the skids. Evan Wolfson and his group Freedom to Marry needed a new plan.

They came up with the “2020 Vision,” a road map for how marriage equality could be achieved nationwide by 2020.

“What I wanted to do was have a horizon that was far enough away that it seemed reasonable to people—that it didn’t seem absurdly close and unattainable,” Wolfson explained, “but not so far away that it lacked all urgency and failed to compel people to action.”

When Wolfson left Lambda Legal in 2001 to form Freedom to Marry, he did so to take the marriage conversation out of the courtroom and into the public eye. At the time, none of the big LGBT orga-

nizations, outside of the legal groups, wanted to take it on. It was a loser. Gays couldn’t marry in one single country anywhere in the world. How could you fundraise off a goal that *might* come to be in the very distant future, but that no one could really envision?

Yet over the last decade, marriage became the great equalizer. Everyone knew what it entailed—including straight Americans. Everyone knew same-sex couples didn’t have it. And until the 2013 decision in *United States v. Windsor* gutted the Defense of Marriage Act, it didn’t matter whether a same-sex couple lived in New York or Alabama; their marriage commitment, however heartfelt, didn’t carry with it the weight of federal law.

As complex as a lifelong commitment is, embracing it at the altar was conceptually very simple—and, perhaps, one of the least complicated forms of discrimination

to solve. That’s at least part of why the ugly stepchild of the movement became the belle of the ball.

But now that it’s leaving in the wake of the Supreme Court’s landmark ruling in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, the question becomes: Can the ball continue on without this belle? And how will the movement continue to access the resources it needs in order to finish the work of protecting LGBT Americans in employment, housing, and public accommodations across the nation?

In private circles, some LGBT advocates have been quietly referring to a potential post-marriage funding drop-off as the “hunger games.” In fact, the week after the Supreme Court ruling, Equality Maryland sent out a fundraising email saying that financial support had “significantly declined” and the organization had “difficult decisions ahead.”

But in truth, the picture that’s emerging is much more complex than just the fiscal cliff some have feared. What’s more likely is that the years ahead will witness a shift in focus and resources from the nation’s bluest and most progressive states to its reddest and least LGBT-friendly. Indeed, a new group of pro-LGBT Republican donors who were drawn into giving by the marriage fight are now making strong commitments to push for nationwide non-discrimination protections, starting in the red states. And the new cash infusion will likely reshape the landscape, with less of an emphasis on here-to-stay institutional organizations than on dissolvable campaigns in the vein of Freedom to Marry.

In 2008, gay progressive donors finally achieved a goal they had been working toward for several election cycles in New York: electing a Democratic majority in the state senate that would smooth the passage of a bill legalizing marriage equality. But as the 2009 session unfolded, the marriage equality bill went down in a stunning defeat in the senate, failing 38 to 24, with eight Democrats voting against it and not a single Republican voting in favor.

Once the hand-wringing and finger-pointing were over, one thing became painfully obvious: Democrats couldn’t be counted on to shepherd the bill through alone. Supporters realized that it would take a coalition of liberals and conservatives to revive the Empire State’s marriage equality effort. A friendship formed

between gay Democratic philanthropist Tim Gill and Republican hedge fund billionaire Paul Singer, who ultimately sunk roughly \$1 million and \$650,000 of personal funds, respectively, into the fight.

On June 24, 2011, a Republican-controlled state senate passed same-sex-marriage legislation with all but one Democrat and the help of four Republican senators. It was the first time a GOP-led chamber had passed a marriage equality bill.

That successful collaboration led Gill to ask Singer to build a pro-LGBT donor network on the right modeled on his own donor network, OutGiving, on the left.

Singer, who has a gay son who married in Massachusetts in 2009, had been giving to marriage efforts piecemeal since 2006, starting with the effort to protect same-sex marriage in Massachusetts and then New Hampshire. But at the beginning of 2013, he formalized a vehicle for his giving, calling it the American Unity Fund (AUF). The Republican or “center-right” donor network counts more than 50 pro-LGBT

ing marriage battle in the early '00s drew him into political giving. Now, Gill views the movement's successful effort on marriage as a road map to achieving the non-discrimination policies that have proven so elusive even though the vast majority of Americans (approximately 75%) support employment protections and even more (9 in 10) believe they already exist.

“By focusing on winning marriage state by state,” Gill said, “we were able to change lives faster and make the case clearly to the Supreme Court that the majority of the country supports the freedom to marry.”

Only 19 states currently have employment laws that protect both gay and transgender workers from discrimination. With that in mind, Gill and Singer have established an organization called Freedom for All Americans (FFAA) that's designed to pick up where Wolfson's group left off.

“Freedom for All Americans is modeled after Freedom to Marry in the sense that it will operate like a campaign team, working closely with donors and other move-

juice from a group of fatigued donors, the marriage success has energized donors on the right who believe that lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Americans should have the same opportunities to succeed as every other U.S. citizen. To them, the tenets of both individual freedom and equal opportunity are perfectly consistent with conservative principles despite social conservative dogma that has suggested otherwise over the last decade-plus.

“Much of the new money in the movement is actually coming from Republicans through American Unity Fund,” Hoover said. “So not only is funding not drying up, we are also having new people step up at higher levels.”

It's as if a handing of the baton is happening between the progressive donors who helped fund the early—and often, heart-wrenching—years of the movement and conservatives who will play an increasing role in the next leg of the race. Hoover admits that conservatives have some catching up to do. Whereas Gill estimates that he has invested approximately \$327 million in LGBT equality since '92, Singer has donated a little over \$20 million since 2006. A significant contribution, to be sure, but he is preparing to spend millions more to achieve his ultimate goal: full political freedom for LGBT Americans.

The center-right donors are also happy to borrow from the progressive crib sheet of what's worked for the gay rights movement and what hasn't. In 2007, for instance, the question of whether to include transgender individuals in the Employment Non-Discrimination Act deeply divided progressives. By the time President Barack Obama entered office in 2009, the legislation had become trans-inclusive (i.e., protecting people on the basis of both sexual orientation and gender identity) but not before a profound internal struggle ensued that pitted Rep. Barney Frank and the Human Rights Campaign against a coalition of several hundred other LGBT organizations that insisted the bill also protect transgender Americans.

A similar scenario had already played out in several states, where sexual-orientation-only bills were passed with the idea that gender identity protections would be added later. It's proven to be a failed strategy. New York, for instance, passed the Sexual Orientation Non-Discrimination Act in 2002, but gender identity remains unprotected in the state to this day.

“Part of the work of the nondiscrimination campaign is going back and securing protections for transgender Americans in New Hampshire, Wisconsin, and New York,” Hoover explained.

“On one hand, we're late to the move-

**It's as if a handing of the baton is happening between the progressive donors who helped fund the early—and often, heart-wrenching—years of the movement and conservatives who will play an increasing role in the next leg of the race.**

supporters who pay a \$1,000 membership fee and then commit to giving \$5,000 to \$25,000 per election cycle to a slate of “pro-freedom” GOP candidates.

Following the Supreme Court ruling, Gill and Singer have trained their sights on what they consider the new frontier of the movement: federal nondiscrimination protections. Unlike the dizzying whirl that delivered marriage equality from political exile to cultural embrace over the past decade, nondiscrimination protections are a goal the movement has been working toward for almost half a century with no luck. Congresswoman Bella Abzug first introduced the Equality Act of 1974, which would have added “sexual orientation” to the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The newly introduced Equality Act would similarly add both “sexual orientation” and “gender identity” to the landmark civil rights legislation, but it's unlikely to gain traction in the GOP-led Congress.

So Gill is returning to exactly where he started: the states. It was a 1992 bill prohibiting local jurisdictions from passing protections for gays in his home state of Colorado that first inspired him to establish the Gill Foundation, a pro-LGBT philanthropic organization. But the emerg-

ment organizations to build the kind of smart, focused effort that will be required to win,” Gill explained.

Gill calls it “imperative” to have an organization that will bring the type of intensive effort to passing nondiscrimination protections that Wolfson and his colleagues brought to marriage.

Margaret Hoover, Singer's adviser on LGBT giving and president of the American Unity Fund, anticipates that FFAA will be about a \$25 million campaign, plus spending on ballot initiatives, each of which could cost several million dollars.

Gill is also particularly aware that it's going to take a massive movement-wide effort to get nondiscrimination protections enacted across the country.

“Many of these donors gave very generously, given their individual capacities, to the effort to win marriage,” he said of the donors who have joined his progressive network over the years. “And that's what it will take from all of us—giving what we can—to win nondiscrimination.”

But the new goal will be getting a boost from an emerging class of Republican donors who were drawn into the LGBT movement by the high-profile marriage effort. In fact, far from squeezing the final



ment,” she added. “On the other hand, we’re learning the lessons of the movement to date—we’re not going to reinvent the wheel. We’re all on the same team and nobody’s leaving trans individuals behind.”

When social conservatives in Indiana tried earlier this year to pass a “religious freedom” bill that, among other things, would allow business owners with personal objections to same-sex marriage to decline service to gay couples, the national spectacle that ensued appeared to be an organic uprising against bigotry and homophobia.

In fact, it was the by-product of the LGBT movement’s successful 2013–2014 bid to block a constitutional ban on same-sex marriage in the state.

Though Indiana outlawed gay marriage in 1997, the state’s social conservatives had been bent on adding a constitutional prohibition ever since. Indiana bylaws require constitutional amendments to be approved by two consecutive general assemblies with the exact same language before going to the ballot. When Hoosier lawmakers finally approved the antigay measure in the 2011–2012 general assembly, it appeared all but certain that they would repeat in the 2013–2014 session and finally send it to the voters.

But the effort ran into two unforeseen problems. First, the 2012 elections demonstrated a sudden sea change in public opinion nationally when voters in four separate states—Maine, Maryland, Minnesota, and Washington—either turned back an antigay constitutional amendment or ratified same-sex-marriage rights by popular vote.

Second, the newly formed American Unity Fund had chosen Indiana as an inaugural battleground for its conservative campaign to promote LGBT freedom.

“We said, ‘We’re going to work in a conservative Midwestern state with a Republican supermajority. We’re going to make the case for freedom, we’re going to make the case for why that discrimination doesn’t belong in the constitution, and we’re going to win,’ ” recalled Tyler Deaton, a senior adviser to AUF.

AUF enlisted the help of Freedom to Marry and the movement’s longtime leaders on the left, Lambda Legal, the ACLU, and HRC. But the new conservative group leaders also did something unprecedented—they convinced several of the state’s major corporations to help them found Freedom Indiana, a statewide campaign for LGBT freedom.

With a budget of about \$2 million, Freedom Indiana ultimately put on a full-court press to defeat the measure that included the best assets of both the right and left:

strong business support, the work of four of the state’s top lobbying firms, and 40 paid field organizers working districts and college campuses across the state. Deaton says the emphasis on field organizing comes directly from progressives.

Combining the best of both worlds worked. When the measure finally came to a vote in early 2014, lawmakers voted to strip the most extreme language banning all forms of relationship recognition.

“We flipped about two dozen house Republicans who voted with us on the key motion,” Deaton said. “We reset the legislative clock and they had to start over.”

So when social conservatives pushed their supercharged Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) through the state legislature in April of this year, AUF and partner organizations quickly resurrected the existing infrastructure from the campaign Freedom Indiana had run in 2013.

“We awakened a sleeping giant and stood that thing right back up,” said Katie Blair, who took over as Freedom Indiana’s campaign manager at the beginning of the year. The fact that the group had initiated the conversation with voters two years earlier and had the built-in support of some of the state’s biggest corporations put the campaign on course to create an intense outcry with homegrown roots that reverberated nationwide. Among other

painful outcomes for Indiana lawmakers, several organizations vowed to boycott Indiana and relocate their national conventions elsewhere, and the Indianapolis-based Angie’s List scrapped plans for a \$40 million expansion in the state.

When all was said and done, Indiana Gov. Mike Pence had been forced to sign a revision to the state’s RFRA law that ensured it could not be used to discriminate against LGBT Hoosiers in a dozen jurisdictions that had enacted sexual-orientation and gender-identity protections. Although the fix did nothing to protect LGBT individuals throughout most of the state since Indiana law provides no such statewide protections, Deaton says the fact that Pence and his cronies had to conduct damage control in the national spotlight was still an important victory.

“The fix was a very big win, symbolically,” Deaton said. In part, it was a win simply because Pence was forced to backtrack on his initial claim that the law didn’t need fixing at all. It also paved the way for sexual orientation and gender identity to be entered into Indiana code for the very first time.

The epic fallout also served as a cautionary tale to other state lawmakers who were considering similar bills before the end of their sessions. Deaton called the imbroglio “the most valuable tool in the toolkit” as he has had conversations with other GOP lawmakers across the country.

When they consider enacting anti-LGBT legislation, Deaton says, “I ask them, ‘How much do you hate yourself?’ ”

Although the LGBT movement did not emerge unscathed, it managed to tamp down the legislative appetite for taking on religious freedom bills targeting LGBTs in advance of the Supreme Court ruling on same-sex marriage. Of more than 50 bills introduced in some 21 state legislatures, only a handful of them were enacted.

While most of AUF’s work has been defensive in nature for the past few years, Deaton said pro-LGBT conservatives are preparing to go on offense. And they are eyeing Arizona, Michigan, and Indiana.

And it’s the Freedom Indiana effort that will serve as a model for conservatives as they take their Freedom for All Americans nondiscrimination campaign into the conservative strongholds of America.

“Freedom Indiana found a way to enlist everyone and really widen the circle,” Deaton noted. “It was just as exciting for the traditional organizing base in the LGBT community as it was for the small business owners.” ♦

*Kerry Eleveld’s book Don’t Tell Me to Wait (Basic Books) publishes October 6, 2015.*

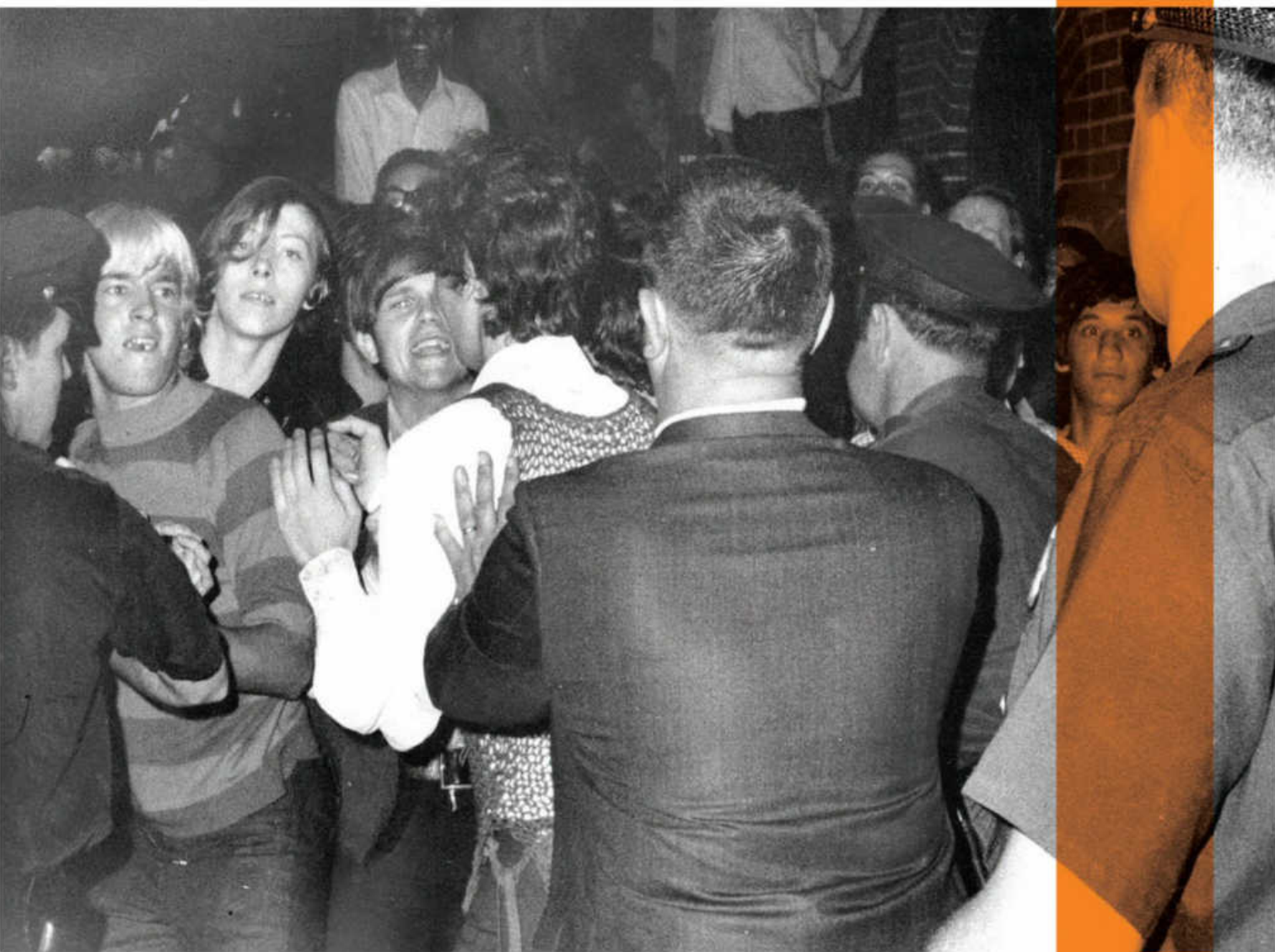


# STONEWALL REVISITED

Blockbuster director Roland Emmerich brings the landmark riots to the big screen.

**BY MATTHEW HAYS**





PHILIPPE BOSSÉ (STONEWALL SET), NY DAILY NEWS ARCHIVE VIA GETTY IMAGES (OUTSIDE STONEWALL INN)

**AS I ENTER** the set of the film *Stonewall*, a sense of surrealism immediately sets in. The cast and crew are standing on a Montreal soundstage in an industrial warehouse on a hot, muggy night in July of last year. They're here to recreate a crucial bit of gay history. I have to look up as a reminder that what I am seeing is not real. The surrounding set is a meticulously reconstructed Christopher Street in Greenwich Village, circa 1969. The offices of the original alt-weekly newspaper the *Village Voice* are here, as are a number of local businesses. At the center of it all is the Stonewall Inn, the drinking hole now widely regarded as ground zero for the contemporary LGBT civil rights movement.

And this, as it turns out, is an especially fortuitous night to be on set. The actors are replicating the wee hours of June 28, 1969, when some LGBT patrons of the Stonewall Inn lost their patience with ongoing police harassment. Some have suggested that the death of Judy Garland, whose funeral had been held that very day in 1969, played a part in that night's events. Whatever it was, something snapped, quite collectively, and after an especially nasty interrogation by police, patrons of the Stonewall

Inn began to pick up anything they could—bricks, stones, coins—and hurl it at the police outside the bar. That spark led to five nights of rioting that marked a shift in American civil rights—an event seen as so significant that President Obama cited it in his re-election speech.

Fog machines are putting a mist in the air, helping to recreate that hot, muggy night. And the pyrotechnics crew is lighting a few fires; the rioters are being depicted forcing police into the Stonewall Inn and then setting it alight. It's striking how real everything feels. I could almost be there on that fraught night, when tempers flared so badly, so epically, that they ushered in a new era.

Lording over this elaborate recreation is director Roland Emmerich, the gay German filmmaker best known for blockbusters *Independence Day*, *The Day After Tomorrow* and *2012*. "This is very personal for me," says Emmerich, in between takes. "I wanted to do it now, as I'm very active in the marriage equality movement. I thought now is the time to do this." Though Emmerich couldn't have known it then, the timing does turn out to be remarkable: One year after *Stonewall* was shot, the U.S. Supreme Court would

#### FIGHTING BACK

Left: Jeremy Irvine and the cast of *Stonewall*. Right: On June 28, 1969, a crowd attempts to impede police arrests outside the Stonewall Inn on Christopher Street in the Greenwich Village neighborhood of Manhattan. The rioters threw bricks, bottles, garbage, and a parking meter at police. The rioting continued for five nights.



[1]



[2]

## CELEBRATING

[1] From left: Vladimir Alexis (with head scarf), Jonny Beauchamp, Jeremy Irvine, and the cast of *Stonewall*. [2] A group of activists celebrates outside the boarded-up Stonewall Inn after riots over the weekend of June 28, 1969.

## MARSHA P. JOHNSON

[3] Otoja Abit as Marsha P. Johnson in *Stonewall*. [4] Marsha P. Johnson and Kady Vandeurs at a New York City demonstration in support of the gay rights bill "Intro 475" in 1973. One of New York City's best known drag queens, Johnson fought in the Stonewall riots and went on to co-found the Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries (STAR) with Sylvia Rivera.

rule that same-sex marriage is a constitutional right.

For Emmerich fans, the move to make a relatively low-budget (\$20 million) film like *Stonewall* might seem a surprise. Famous for bombastic CGI-soaked disaster films, Emmerich has been called the "Master of Disaster," a title once held by '70s icon Irwin Allen, director of *The Poseidon Adventure*. "I like the idea of going from a bigger film to one that's more personal, like this one," Emmerich says. "I liked the beauty of these characters. I know people know me as making huge films with big budgets. I like the idea of alternating between a film like that and a film like this one."

While the story of Stonewall has become legend, Emmerich and screenwriter Jon Robin Baitz (*Brothers and Sisters*, *The Slap*) decided the landmark moment should be told through the very personal lens of one character as he journeys to New York from the American countryside in search of his gay identity. British actor Jeremy Irvine (*War Horse*) plays Danny, a young man desperately searching for love in the bars and streets of Manhattan. Though Emmerich was eager to illuminate this step toward liberation, he also wanted to remind people of just how different things were for queer people in 1969: Sodomy was still a criminal offense in many states; and even in cosmopolitan, worldly New York, wearing drag could land you in the slammer. If being bashed was the problem, you couldn't go to the police, who were often every bit as homophobic as the bashers.

Danny is a lost young man, longing to find other people like himself. His character is fictional, but Emmerich felt having a fictional character guide the audience through true historical events was the best way to proceed. Emmerich is especially proud of the cast, which also includes Jonathan Rhys Meyers (who plays Danny's older love interest), Ron Perlman (as Ed Murphy, based on the actual crooked manager of the Stonewall Inn), and Jonny Beauchamp (as Ray Castro, as a streetwise and effeminate young man, who was also an actual participant in the riots).

"When I look back at what these kids did," Emmerich says of the young rioters at Stonewall, "I'm in awe of them. They had nothing to lose. Now being gay is not such an issue, of course. And that's progress. There were so many people who were just bystanders. There is this famous quote from a Black Panther who went down and saw what was happening, and he said, 'The fem boys were the ones who were fighting the hardest.' That quote stuck in my mind. Because traditionally, we as a gay people tend to look down on the fem guys. I wanted to make them—the fem guys, the loudest guys—the heroes."

**EMMERICH** began his artistic career as a painter and sculptor, but he found himself drawn to cinema, enrolling in a Munich film school. In 1984 he made his first feature film, *The Noah's Ark Principle*, a sci-fi film about the fight over a military space station set in the late 20th century. That film proved a hit at that year's Berlin International Film Festival, where it was the opening act, selling well and establishing Emmerich's tone as a director intrigued by technology and a dystopic view of the future. His career now includes a string of memorable big-budget films that use CGI to create catastrophe, including *Stargate* and the 1998 *Godzilla* remake. He has divided his time between L.A., Berlin, New York, and London ever since achieving big-screen success in the early '90s.

Emmerich's awakenings as a filmmaker happened much earlier than his self-identification as gay and his political awakenings. He still recalls the first film he ever saw in a cinema, David Lean's 1965 historical epic *Doctor Zhivago*. "My older brother took me to *2001: A Space Odyssey*, and I'll never forget that. When I went to America when I was 13, I went to a drive-in and saw *Planet of the Apes*. I saw it several more times. People were like, 'How many times can you see this film?' I also liked *The Poseidon Adventure* and *The Towering Inferno*. In fact, *The Towering*





[3]

[4]

"This is about street kids who don't care if they're being called gay. They just hate that they get beaten up, that society really is against them, and that their favorite clubs are being raided. They just want the simple freedom to be themselves."

*Inferno* was a bit of a model for *Independence Day*."

By his own admission, he came out rather late. "When I was a young director in Germany, I didn't want the word 'gay' in front of my name, because the gay directors in Germany made such different films than the ones I was making. I thought I'd leave that to them. But when I came to Hollywood I realized a lot of the big directors were gay—that anyone could be gay and direct anything."

Emmerich befriended a number of famous directors, including Joel Schumacher and Bryan Singer. "I realized you didn't have to be limited in any form to do what you want to do. Look at Joel, he made Batman movies. And Bryan made a Superman movie."

That realization came after Emmerich had come out to his friends and family. "I came out in phases. First I told my friends. I was an American, in my 30s," says the filmmaker, who still effects a boyish charm at age 59.

The first gay-themed film that had an impact on Emmerich is telling: *The Boys in the Band*, William Friedkin's adaptation of the Mart Crowley play

(released in 1970, just one year after the Stonewall riots). "I first saw it in Germany. I wasn't really even aware people made films like that." *The Boys in the Band* set the standard for the debate over negative-versus-positive images of gay characters on the big screen. (The film's release predated the common use of the word "queer" in academic and activist circles.) And this debate is something Emmerich was keenly aware of as he was deciding on a tone for *Stonewall*: How to make a film about this moment of liberation, one he wanted to be uplifting?

"I looked at all the gay films that were made and that had done well—*Philadelphia*, *Brokeback Mountain*, *Milk*. Always someone dies in those films. There has to be some sort of somber attitude. There are some somber moments in our film, but ours is more of a celebration of being gay and coming out into the open. This is about street kids who don't care if they're being called gay. They just hate that they get beaten up, that society really is against them, and that their favorite clubs are being raided. They just want the simple freedom to be themselves."

Though many of the movies Emmerich references are populated by straight actors playing gay, he notes that many of the actors who played gay in *The Boys in the Band* were in fact gay themselves. He says casting should be blind to sexual orientation. "Some of our actors are gay, some aren't," Emmerich says, matter-of-factly. "That's progress."

After shooting an especially exhausting riot scene, Irvine explains his reasons for wanting to play Danny. "There are a lot of remakes being done right now. When I read this script I could see how original it all was. I wanted it so badly. I actually cried when reading it. When I was auditioning I was working with Colin Firth [on *The Railway Man*], who is in *A Single Man*, which is one of my favorite films. He said he had no qualms about playing a gay character. We're actors, and at the end of the day it's all make-believe."

The historical weight at the heart of *Stonewall's*



Director Roland Emmerich

**RAY CASTRO**  
Left: Jonny Beauchamp as Ray Castro and cast on the *Stonewall* set. Above right: Raymond Castro in the 1960s. Castro was inside the Stonewall Inn on the first night of the uprising and was arrested. "A lot of people, especially the young ones, have no inkling what Stonewall is," Castro said to the *New York Daily News*. "They think Gay Pride is just a big party. None of this would have been possible if it wasn't for 1969."

script was intensely meaningful for the outrageously handsome Irvine. Tonight's scene calls for him to throw a brick and then scream, "Gay power!" at the top of his lungs.

After Emmerich yells cut, the scene is done. It took a few takes. Irvine looks up. He's in tears.

"I think I can be forgiven for crying after filming that scene," he says. "I think you can relate to anything through film. There were a few nights in 1969 when gays owned this street. That's what this movie is about." ♦

*In early August 2015, more than a year after visiting the Stonewall set in Montreal, the first trailer for the film was released. In short order, online publications and commenters accused Roland Emmerich of "white-washing" the Stonewall story.*

*Emmerich responded on his Facebook page: "I understand that following the release of our trailer there have been initial concerns about how this character's involvement is portrayed, but when this film—which is truly a labor of love for me—finally comes to theaters, audiences will see that it deeply honors the real-life activists who were there—including Marsha P. Johnson, Sylvia Rivera, and Ray Castro—and all the brave people who sparked the civil rights movement which continues to this day. We are all the same in our struggle for acceptance."*



#### ON THE COVER

Peter Hujar is a photographer best known for his portraits, including the often-reproduced image of Candy Darling on her hospital deathbed.

But it was to mark the first anniversary of the Stonewall uprising that Hujar shot this iconic image, which the Gay Liberation Front employed as a poster to recruit participants in the first Pride march in June 1970. Though he hoped to gather hundreds of subjects, only a handful were courageous enough to attend the early morning shoot in the Flatiron neighborhood of Manhattan. Undaunted, Hujar mounted the pedestal of a lamppost and directed his subjects to charge at the camera, and in the resulting image—which was papered on buildings throughout Greenwich Village and which read, COME OUT! JOIN THE SISTERS AND BROTHERS OF THE GAY LIBERATION FRONT—those 18 people have the might of an army.

Fran Winant, one of the participants, told *The Gay & Lesbian Review*, "As a measure of our success, no one now can know the fear we felt then at being in this photo and the poster made from it. Each year millions celebrate gay liberation with us. I imagine them filling the empty space in the photograph behind us."

While very few photos of the Stonewall riots exist, Hujar's iconic image resonates with the uncompromising spirit, rage, and hope of a burgeoning civil rights movement. —Matthew Breen

PHILIPPE BOSSÉ (STONEWALL SET); GAY LIBERATION FRONT POSTER IMAGE BY PETER HUJAR, 1970. © 1987 THE PETER HUJAR ARCHIVE LLC; COURTESY PACE/MACGILL GALLERY, NEW YORK AND FRAENKEL GALLERY, SAN FRANCISCO



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Julianne Moore and  
Ellen Page in *Freeheld*



FILM / DIANE ANDERSON-MINSHALL

## Love in the Time of Cancer

Ellen Page and Julianne Moore make *Freeheld* more than just a true story about a dying lesbian detective, her mechanic girlfriend, and the legal battle that changed New Jersey. It's a surprisingly tender love story.

**L**aurel Hester is a New Jersey police detective so closeted at work that she drives several towns over just to socialize with other lesbians. When her cop partner Dane arrives at her new home unexpectedly with a housewarming present, he sees her girlfriend Stacie tooling around with plants on the front lawn. Dane assumes Stacie is the gardener, but Hester corrects him. Hester tells him that Stacie is her “roommate.” Stacie rolls her eyes and huffs away.

It's a scene so common as to be mundane, and yet so symbolic. Though Hester eventually does the right thing by Stacie—becoming one of the most visible advocates for LGBT equality in her state along the way—that moment cuts right to the heart of every queer person over a certain age who has been introduced as the “friend” or “roommate” at some point in their romantic lives. So many of us have.

I've been there. My spouse of 25 years and I have always been out, sometimes to our detriment, but my first girlfriend and I were closeted for two years. We were “roommates,”

“friends,” even “sisters” on occasion, and we played it so well that we double dated (with boys) and shared a college dorm (beds pushed together at night, separated by day), an apartment (with a roommate), and briefly a room at a homeless shelter where the only person who guessed our truth was a 26-year-old bisexual sex worker with a broken jaw and life experience we could barely fathom. I was closeted on the job at the time as well. This was the late 1980s, but a 2014 Human Rights Campaign survey reported that over half of all LGBT people in the United States are still closeted at work today.

The “roommate” relationship game is brutal and heart-breaking, and when you're ready to be out and the other person isn't, hearing yourself described as the “roommate” cuts to the bone. Of course, with Hester and Stacie, this moment is both real life and cinematic history: The scene comes from the new film *Freeheld*, the true story of Laurel Hester (played by Julianne Moore), a woman who, in 2005, is dying of lung cancer and fighting to have her partner of five years, Stacie



Andree (Ellen Page), inherit her pension benefits after Hester's death. The Ocean County, New Jersey, Freeholders (akin to a city council) decline to offer pension benefits to registered domestic partners, arguing that it's not in their power. With the help of Garden State Equality (New Jersey's largest LGBT organization) and its founder Steven Goldstein (portrayed by Steve Carell), Hester—a 25-year veteran of the local police force—fights back. Though the battle will pave the way for marriage equality in the state, Hester throughout the film demands that it's not about marriage. It's about equal rights.

Moore, who won the best actress Oscar earlier this year for *Still Alice*, is magnificent and agonizing in the role, elevating a thoughtful film about complex queer women as she has numerous times in the past, most recently in *The Kids Are All Right*.

"She inarguably reaches a new height in her groundbreaking career," says *Freeheld* director Peter Sollett. "To work with her on this true story was incredibly inspiring. Her dedication to getting to know the real-life subjects of our story and to depicting that with integrity set the standard for all of us."

Her co-star, Ellen Page, agrees. "She's just so good. When you're working with someone who is just so extraordinarily present—because they are just so good at what they do—when you're in the scene with them, they bring more out of you. The really special thing about Julianne, which is so lovely and inspiring, is that she just loves what she does."

Having been in blockbusters including *X-Men* and *Inception*, Page—who was impressive in her breakout role as a teen girl turning the tables on a sexual predator in *Hard Candy*—is perhaps still best known for the indie flick *Juno*. *Freeheld* is Page's first film to be released since she came out as a lesbian.

Though it's a true story that she says is "so, so devastating," Page admits that playing a role in which her character fell in love with a woman was a special experience. "It was a feeling on set that I hadn't had in a very long time," she says. "As a lot of people can probably relate who've been in the closet, you lose a lot of inspiration, ambition, general joy in your life. There's this sort of cloud that's always pursuing you. To get to be out of that and then also get to play a gay character was a pretty nice experience."

It shows on screen. Though she looks young as the sweet, butch mechanic who falls in love with the older cop, there's something luminous and arousing about Page in the role that we haven't seen before. After a career in the closet, Page may be discovering parts of herself. Her work conveys a deep understanding of the story's complexities better than many young actors could achieve. Page says, "Stacie enters a relationship [that's] closeted, and it's not the most ideal situation. But there's some sort of understanding of the complexity of it [for Laurel]. That's something that I can relate to...I can understand the pain, the compromise."

There's queer cred throughout the film, including gay screenwriter Ron Nyswaner, who came to fame for penning the 1993 screenplay to the groundbreaking Tom Hanks film *Philadelphia*.

In such films, Page says, "You hope you show the level of pain and shame of having to be closeted and then having to fight for a right that is so clearly yours...You just want to help those who are clearly having trouble understanding potentially

understand. Maybe move them in a way that starts to make a change, or helps them evolve in some capacity. And you also hope young gay people or young gay women can go and watch the movie and see some part of their story realized. It's such a thrill to be able to go sit in a theater and be like, *Wow, some aspect of my story is being told here*. When you're gay or really part of any minority, you don't get that as much."

On the surface, the story doesn't sound sexy: a woman fights for pension benefits due her as a public employee, then dies shortly after winning. But the film has real sex appeal, especially in the beginning as the tension and romance develop between the two women.

"Julianne and Ellen brought the story's sensuality to life," says Sollett. "Their chemistry is undeniable and occasionally flammable."

It's a tough task in a film that has to show two women as they meet, fall in love, get it on, come out, get sick, and launch a legal civil rights battle in rapid succession. Page chalks it up to a wonderful friendship between her and Moore, as well as Moore's being "probably the straight actor who's told the most gay stories" on film.

There's urgency to the movie's themes of love and equality that we've seen in other gay films, though most (from *Milk* to *Brokeback Mountain* and *Desert Hearts*) are rooted in the past. But *Freeheld* takes place just a decade ago, and it feels very much like a marker of current issues from workplace discrimination to same-sex marriage.

And *Freeheld* is revolutionary in its ordinariness too. The lesbians depicted here look like the ones you see every day, from Olivia cruises to working-class towns across the country, wearing sensible shoes and, occasionally, flannel shirts. As Stacie, Page looks very much like half of lesbian America's first girlfriend. Significantly, *Freeheld*'s wardrobe underscores how much the feminine look of *The L Word* has come to dominate cinematic visions of lesbians. But real-life photos of Stacie and Laurel look a lot like they do on screen.

"We typically see very safe—in regards to the male gaze—lesbian characters," Page says. She was excited to realize that "the agenda was to make something very *real*. I'm happy that you get to see two female leads on screen who get to dress the way we got to dress. You don't see that very often."

At alternating times the film is also heartrending, uplifting, exquisitely graceful, intricate, and maddening. Comparisons to other films are inevitable, and I expect to see some critics shorthand it as a lesbian *Brokeback Mountain*. Page snorts when I tell her this.

"It just goes back to the fact that there [are] so few of the stories being told in a big way—of course we have queer cinema and what have you, but it doesn't always break through into the mainstream. It'll probably get compared to *Philadelphia* particularly because Ron wrote *Philadelphia* and there are similarities. Hopefully we'll get to a point where we have enough queer, trans, etc., stories out there that we won't be having that conversation anymore, and it will just be another movie."

For his part, though, Sollett tells me he won't thumb his nose at the comparison: "*Brokeback* is a beautiful, well-acted, and tenderly directed film—any comparison between ours and theirs is just fine with me." ♦



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Susannah York, Beryl Reid, and Coral Browne in a scene at lesbian club the Gateways in *The Killing of Sister George*

FILM / JUNE THOMAS

## Butch Courage

*The Killing of Sister George* is a rare and unflinching glimpse into real-life late-1960s lesbianism, and it deserves reputation rehabilitation.

**F**orty-seven years ago, *The Killing of Sister George* revolutionized the way lesbians are portrayed in the movies, changed the way films are advertised, and, thanks to a sex scene that was considered “startling” at the time, earned one of the Motion Picture Association of America’s first X ratings. It’s mentioned in every serious history of queer cinema, but these days, because it isn’t available on a streaming service and because video stores have become almost as rare as lesbian bars, it is seldom seen. That needs to change.

In 1968, the film was mocked by straight critics and vilified in the lesbian press, but those harsh judgments reflected the attitudes of the time. From the perspective of 2015, *The Killing of Sister George* is both a fascinating chronicle of lesbian London in the swinging ’60s and a bracing reminder of how hard it has always been to live an openly gay life.

The carnage of the title is the impending death of a beloved country nurse on a popular TV soap opera. June Buckridge (Beryl Reid), the middle-aged actress who plays Sister George—and is known to one and all by her character’s name—is convinced she’s going to be axed when she receives a visit from no-nonsense BBC executive Mercy Croft

(Coral Browne) at the flat she shares with her girlfriend, Alice McNaught (Susannah York). In fact, Croft has merely come to chastise George for a drunken incident involving a pair of nuns and a taxi, but a few days later, she confirms that George is being written out of the show. She then compounds George’s misery by seducing Alice.

While many aspects of *Sister George*’s reputation are ripe for rehabilitation, it would be silly to suggest that the movie presents lesbian relationships in an entirely positive light. George is a hopeless alcoholic with anger issues; she’s jealous and suspicious of Alice—known as “Childie” for her immature manner—and while it gradually becomes clear that she genuinely loves Childie, they spend most of their time together bickering. George takes pleasure in punishing Childie for tiny offenses—at one point forcing her to eat the butt of her cigar.

It’s easy to see why some lesbians were uncomfortable with this representation of their kind. In the lesbian publication *The Ladder*, one writer fretted that the film would “confirm the general public in its outdated and patronizing, if not hostile, conception of lesbians” and called for it to be picketed. In the same issue, a reviewer wrote that *The Killing of Sister George* “has almost as much relationship to the life of the ordinary lesbian as Donald Duck has to an ordinary man.” With a mixture of anger and sadness, she condemned “movies that appear to deal with lesbians, seen entirely through the eyes of heterosexual males.”

It’s true that *The Killing of Sister George* was created by a team of straight men, and while they may not have been experts on lesbianism, they at least understood what it means to be scapegoated and persecuted. Frank Marcus, who wrote the play the movie was based on, and Lukas Heller, who penned the screenplay, were both Jews who had fled Ger-



many. Robert Aldrich, who directed and produced the movie (as well as camp classics like *What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?* and *Hush...Hush, Sweet Charlotte*), was a cousin of future vice president Nelson Rockefeller's, but he was disinherited by his wealthy family after he dropped out of college to work in Hollywood.

Aldrich made a major contribution to the preservation of lesbian history when he filmed a key scene in the Gateways, a lesbian club that operated in London between 1931 and 1985, and used 40 members as extras. At the Gates, as it was commonly known, George and Childie perform a comedy routine dressed as Laurel and Hardy, then a fab four-piece combo performs pop hits for dancing. It now feels miraculous to get a glimpse at the décor of this long-shuttered venue, to see the clothes and haircuts favored by the patrons, and to marvel at their dance moves. Amazingly, the film used the club's real name and address. As music journalist Val Wilmer explained in her memoir, for years the Gateways' address was "whispered collusively...between women throughout the country"; *The Killing of Sister George* shared the location of this Sapphic paradise with the entire world.

Although it made him no friends at the time, Aldrich was determined to show lesbians as sexual creatures. Consequently, the film added a love scene between Childie and Croft that hadn't been present in the play. This led to its being awarded an X rating from the newly established MPAA. (Even so, the scene was cut in several states.) Aldrich challenged the rating and sued several Los Angeles media outlets that refused to run an ad for the movie just as he submitted it. He lost the case, which established the precedent that still allows newspapers across the country to edit movie advertising to reflect their market's tastes and "moral standards."

Some critics claimed *Sister George* was an exercise in dykesploitation and suggested that the lawsuits were just part of Aldrich's marketing campaign. The *Saturday Review* said: "Aldrich obviously couldn't care less about the problems of Lesbian ladies or aging character actresses. He was out to earn his 'X' rating, and he has." That seems unfair: In *The Celluloid Closet*, Vito Russo reported that Aldrich offered to make cuts to avoid an X certificate but was told that the MPAA's president had already decided "it gets an X no matter what you do to it."

Whatever Aldrich's motivations, the two-minute sex scene became both a target for censors and an object of mockery from the critics. Writing in the *New York Times*, Renata Adler said that Croft "approaches [Childie's] breast with a kind of scholarly interest, like an ichthyologist finding something ambivalent that has drifted up on the beach," while John Simon likened the breast fondling to "testing a particularly inscrutable cantaloupe for its ripeness." Viewed today, the scene still seems cold and unsexy. Nevertheless, it does show two mature women—Childie was in her 30s, Croft in her 50s—having sex to the point of orgasm. That was revolutionary in 1968, and it's hardly commonplace in the movies and television of today.

George is without a doubt the hero of the film. She consistently refuses the protection of the



Beryl Reid and Susannah York  
in *The Killing of Sister George*

**[Sister George] is an unapologetic old-school butch who clomps about in comfortable tweeds, drinks pints of beer, and decorates to suit her tastes, even if they seem unacceptably masculine to others.**

closet—making no attempt to convince her employer that her girlfriend is a mere flat mate and proudly announcing that she plans to spend the evening at London's most noto-

rious lesbian nightspot. She is an unapologetic old-school butch who clomps about in comfortable tweeds, drinks pints of beer, and decorates to suit her tastes, even if they seem unacceptably masculine to others. When she isn't depressed and drunk, George is kind, fun, and vibrant. The movie even shows an appreciation of lesbian aesthetics when an attractive young woman at the Gates tells a friend she prefers George to Childie. Yes, George is a victim—she loses her job, sacrificed to give a short-term boost to the soap opera's ratings—and in the final scene, she's alone and unemployed. But she still has her integrity, and in the world of *The Killing of Sister George*, that's a rare commodity indeed. ♦



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MARRIAGE / MICHAEL MUSTO

## Gay Assimilation

It's a wonderful thing to have marriage equality. But don't throw me a bachelor party just yet.

**I**n an ironic twist of fate, the two issues our community has fought most ferociously for are the last two things I'd ever want for myself. A perennial bachelor, I was always horrified by the idea of marriage (and always used my gayness as a convenient excuse for not being hitched). And being in the military? I'd sooner chew on cut glass after a lengthy visit to Chick-fil-A. I remember a co-employee years ago who told me he'd pretended to be gay to get out of the military. Now we were fighting to be able to be out and proud and holding a machine gun! (We won the right in 2011, when "don't ask, don't tell" was finally repealed.)

Writer-wit Fran Lebowitz echoed some of my thoughts when she addressed gay assimilation in her 2010 HBO show *Public Speaking* and said there are some benefits to being mar-

ginalized, especially when you consider the dubious steps forward we were taking. "Do I think gay marriage is progress?" Lebowitz said, with arched eyebrow. "Are you kidding me? This was one of the good things about being gay," she added, meaning the fact that you didn't have marriage.

"I am stunned," she went on, "that the two greatest desires, apparently, of people involved in the gay rights movement are gay marriage and gays in the military. Really? To me, it seems like these are the two most confining institutions on the planet. Why would you be beating down the doors to get in? Usually, a fight for freedom is a fight for freedom. This is like the opposite—this is like a fight for slavery."

Of course a few provisos are in order here. First of all, Lebowitz has hardly been a trailblazing, out force in the culture, so her words should be taken with a grain of closet dust. Secondly, she means what she says but intones it with a sardonic edge, being first and foremost a humorist, after all. And finally, Lebowitz adds that, naturally, she'd vote for the very issues she makes fun of because it's important that other people in the community (who want them) get them.

So would I! I want them too—for everyone else. I recognize how vital they are as linchpins of our movement, as symbols of the need to get the same rights non-gays have always had.



(And marriage is not just a symbolic gesture; it affords you real rights when it comes to your partnership, rights that are important to put on paper.) But those two issues shouldn't be the whole movement. There are so many other things to fight for, from protection against hate crimes to safeguards in the workplace to the proper color scheme for the bedroom, for God's sake. And now that all 50 states now have full marriage equality, we threaten to become as safe and banal and mundane as some of our straight counterparts. We now embody the same values a lot of gays used to spend their time conscientiously running away from!

Mind you, it's been inspiring for me to see how institutionalized changes in our society have made us more embraced and supported. I never thought we'd have gay TV shows, an out lesbian senator (Wisconsin's Tammy Baldwin), and out trans celebrities like Laverne Cox and Caitlin Jenner opening people's eyes and minds. This is all wonderful—but is there a price for it? With all this progress, don't we lose the chance to be avant-garde and a little dangerous? With the underground subsumed into the mainstream and gays all striving to behave well proving we've earned the right to marriage and parenthood, some of our edge has surely fallen off the edge.

When I came out way back in the 1970s, the big rights topics weren't even on the table yet, and since they weren't really percolating that heavily in our minds, it was fabulous to be gay and relatively carefree. Disco was the prevalent form of nightlife, and we ruled the clubs with fashion, expert dancing, and constant hooking up (in person). And going to gay house parties in Manhattan was like coming upon an exciting subculture full of cultured professionals in the prime of their lives, letting it rip with élan and very little self-consciousness. We weren't worried about picking the kids up from school every day or earning enough to support five people with our paycheck. We were just living our lives, and as such, we were appreciated by a lot of the straight mainstream, who found us radioactively creative and thrillingly different. There was a titillating subversion to being gay, and it's possible that gave us a little more heart, too. Being marginalized, we had more connection with one another, as well as compassion for other marginalized groups. Believe me, I'm not saying I'm sorry I missed out on the pre-Stonewall 1960s, when you could be arrested for holding a guy's hand in public, but I do miss the '70s, when we were perched between the underground status of the past and the accepted state of the future, placed in a glittery limbo where "gay" equaled "fun" way more than it does today.

No, we didn't have a lot of positive representation in the media, but in a way, it was character-building to be an outsider, to be in a community that grew in stature because we were in some ways treated as second class and had to work harder to gain recognition. Faced with the unusual situation of being oppressed yet coveted, we excelled, dressed up, and flamed around with pride that came from within, not outside. As a result, there was room for "screaming queens" and other entertainingly outrageous types because we weren't all auditioning to be Father of the Year or to be sent



**We were just living our lives, and as such, we were appreciated by a lot of the straight mainstream, who found us radioactively creative and thrillingly different. There was a titillating subversion to being gay, and it's possible that gave us a little more heart, too.**

overseas to fight a war!

All that being said, I have to admit that I'd gladly sacrifice my avant-garde status in order to have equal rights for my brothers and sisters. No one can force me to get married—or go to the Middle East—but if they want to do so, I'm with them. And if I still long for the days when we were sexy outcasts, I can just stay home with my clippings, Norma Desmond-style, and live in the past. Besides, my wacky viewpoints and offbeat persona haven't really changed that much, so I get to enjoy both worlds—I'm still the '70s outcast but blessed with today's copious rights possibilities. Feel free to join me in this enchanted state. Get married, but stay emotionally on the margins, OK? But don't get divorced—that's the ultimate straight activity. ♦



**Michael Musto** is the author of *Manhattan on the Rocks*, *Downtown*, and *Fork on the Left, Knife in the Back*, and a weekly columnist for OUT.com.



A LIST / BRANDON VOSS

## Guiding Light

No question: When it comes to LGBT and HIV activism, Judith Light is the boss. The Emmy-winning '80s TV icon now enlightens viewers as Shelly Pfefferman, the ex-wife of a trans woman, in Amazon's Golden Globe-winning streaming series *Transparent*, this year's most Emmy-nominated comedy. Returning to Broadway this fall in *Thérèse Raquin*, the two-time Tony winner is determined to make a difference with her one life to live.

**You've been fighting for LGBT rights since long before it was fashionable. In fact, you graced the cover of *The Advocate* for a story about straight allies in 1996. What a felicitous time for us to catch up.** It is! Who would've thought back then that we'd have marriage equality? But this incredible, inspiring community came together and put one foot in front of the other.

**How did you celebrate the Supreme Court ruling?** We were at work on *Transparent*, so I was sharing in the love and joy everyone was experiencing. But I wasn't jumping up and

down—it was more of a deep, profound satisfaction that comes with knowing what was wrong had finally been made right.

**Your activism began in earnest when you played the mother of Ryan White, who became a poster child for the AIDS crisis, in the 1989 TV movie *The Ryan White Story*. Do celebrities have a responsibility to raise awareness of social issues?**

I don't know that they do. I felt I had a responsibility. When I met my manager, Herb Hamsher, in 1979, I'd been teetering on leaving the business. I was doing *One Life to Live*, and I thought, *What difference is my life making?* I told Herb, "If I ever get any notoriety, I need to find a way to make a difference." Certainly, he and his partner, Jonathan, have guided my career in a remarkable way. Whether I'm involved with Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS while doing a play or working with Project Angel Food when I'm shooting in Los Angeles, it's always been about where I can do the most good.

**Have you gotten backlash from conservative fans?**

After *The Ryan White Story*, people wrote and told me they'd never watch me again. I pay very little attention to that. I pay attention to letters I get from sons who say I made them feel strong enough to come out to their families. I pay attention to letters from mothers who, because of something I've said, have been able to embrace their children.

**What are your thoughts on PrEP?** I'm supportive of anything that can help

prevent the spread of HIV, but we also need to educate young people. Use what's available to you, but please use your head as well. Look back at your history, my children. Use a condom.

**Your television work has brought you into so many homes. Has that helped your message influence a mainstream audience?**

Absolutely. They might say, "Oh, wait, she thinks this is OK?" She talks about how we're one community and should live a true life? Maybe I should take another look at this." That's why *Transparent* is such an important show. So many people have been educated, moved, and empowered by it.

**Because you play the ex-wife of a trans woman, have you taken note of Kris Jenner's reaction to her ex-husband's transition?** It's hard to avoid. But I tend to focus more on Caitlyn, whose magnificence is saving lives. She's not living in regret. She's living in the joy of who she's finally able to be. It delights me. She's a model for so many people—not just for the LGBT community but for the straight community as well. She's teaching all of us how to live our lives freely, openly, and beautifully.

**What's it like to be a part of *Transparent* during this watershed moment for trans visibility?** It's truly divine choreography. Before each table read, Jill Soloway, the show's creator, stands up and leads everyone in a moment of gratitude—gratitude for the opportunity to tell this story. As Victor Hugo said, "Nothing is more powerful than an idea whose time has come." ♦





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